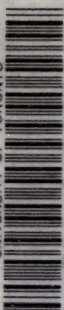


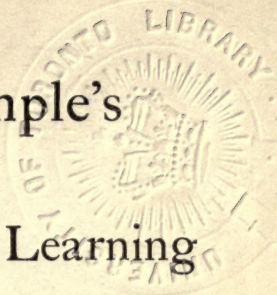
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Sir William Temple's
 Essays
 On Ancient & Modern Learning
 and
 On Poetry



Edited by
 J. E. Spingarn
 Professor of Comparative Literature
 Columbia University, New York

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

TEMPLE's fame has waned since the days when the essays here reprinted were Pope's favourite prose ; but these still maintain their historical importance, for they represent a turning point in the development of English style, and in them something of the tone and temper of the eighteenth-century essay are already apparent. Goldsmith need not have told us that Temple's style was 'the model by which the best prose writers in the reign of Queen Anne formed theirs', nor Swift that Temple 'advanced our English tongue to as great perfection as it can well bear' ; to read aloud a single essay is to discover for oneself this forgotten secret. Johnson suggested to Boswell at least one of the causes of this reforming power : 'Sir William Temple was the first writer who gave cadence to English prose. Before his time they were careless of arrangement, and did not mind whether a sentence ended with an important word or an insignificant word, or with what part of speech it was concluded.' But the charm was not merely the charm of cadence, nor that grace and musical eloquence which Temple had found in French prose and strove to

naturalize in England ; it was not only finish of style, but the dignity and restraint of temper, the fastidious taste, which found merely a fitting garment in the outer technique of language. This is what Goldsmith meant when he said that Temple 'wrote always like a man of sense and a gentleman'; it was this fastidious taste and aloofness, rather than moral scruple, which kept him pure of speech in an age of licence.

The somewhat flimsy learning of the first of these two essays, or rather the trivial blunder that provoked the controversy on the authenticity of the Letters of Phalaris, has been his undoing. Macaulay, in some violent and ill-considered pages, has thought it a simple matter to dismiss Temple's every claim to a serious place, and classical scholars have been content to echo these sneers ; but the fact is that his real importance lies, not so much in the mere varnish of style, as in the regions of taste and ideas in criticism. In an age which failed to distinguish between classic art and neo-classic theory, Temple urged his generation alike to a defence of the ancients and to scorn of ancient rule. In a literary age which set store chiefly by dogmatic law, he urged the new criterion of critical 'taste'.

The history of seventeenth-century classicism is not to be written in a few introductory pages. All the world knows how the Italians of the later Renaissance passed on this legacy to the France of

Louis XIV, and how it passed thence to Stuart England. But it is not generally realized that the earliest reaction against its excesses, almost a century before the final romantic revolt, is represented by a school of wits and *virtuosi* for whom taste rather than formal precept served as the test of literary excellence. The alien Saint-Évremond was perhaps the chief standard-bearer of this movement in Temple's day; Dryden, in some of his rarer moods, gave it his sanction; but in Temple himself this new standard moves harmoniously, for the first time in English, in a medium of expression that illustrates the new theory by the very grace of its practice. He attacks all the rules that burdened the creative art of his period, praising English comedy as a natural and unhampered expression of English life. He seeks to substitute historical criticism for the abstract criticism of Rules. He is full of dicta and *aperçus* that hold the attention of later critics, full of phrases and ideas whose history begins, and only begins, with him. He attacks the moral licence of contemporary English literature and the excessive refinement of contemporary French style. He sets the seal of approval on English humour, and distinguishes it from its continental analogues. He foresees the new modes of romantic interest in the unknown literatures of the far North and the far East. The blunder of Phalaris cannot override such claims as these.

It is in order that students may know something at first hand of the claims of Temple in this dual aspect of stylist and critic, that these two essays, long inaccessible, have been reprinted from the third volume of my *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*. The notes which accompany them in that collection appear here also, with a few trifling variations and excisions, but without any really substantial change.

J. E. SPINGARN.

I. AN ESSAY UPON THE
ANCIENT AND MODERN LEARNING

II. OF POETRY

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE

(1690)

I. AN ESSAY UPON THE ANCIENT AND MODERN LEARNING

WHOEVER Converses much among the Old Books will be something hard to please among the New; yet these must have their Part too in the leisure of an idle man, and have, many of them, their Beauties as well as their Defaults. Those of Story, or Relations of Matter of Fact, have a value from their Substance as much as from their Form, and the variety of Events is seldom without Entertainment or Instruction, how indifferently soever the Tale is told. Other sorts of Writings have little of esteem but what they receive from the Wit, Learning, or Genius of the Authors, and are seldom met with of any excellency, because they do but trace over the Paths that have been beaten by the Ancients, or Comment, Critick, and Flourish upon them, and are at best but Copies after those Originals, unless upon Subjects never touched by them, such as are all that relate to the different Constitutions of Religions, Laws, or Governments in several Countries, with all matters of Controversie that arise upon them.

Two Pieces that have lately pleased me, abstracted from any of these Subjects, are, one in *English* upon the *Antediluvian* World, and another in *French* upon the *Plurality of Worlds*; one Writ by a Divine, and the other by a Gentleman, but both very finely in their several Kinds and upon their several Subjects, which would have made very poor

work in common hands. I was so pleased with the last (I mean the Fashion of it rather than the Matter, which is old and beaten) that I enquired for what else I could of the same hand, till I met with a small Piece concerning Poesy, which
5 gave me the same exception to both these Authors, whom I should otherwise have been very partial to. For the first could not end his Learned Treatise without a Panegyrick of Modern Learning and Knowledge in comparison of the Ancient: And the other falls so grosly into the
10 censure of the Old Poetry and preference of the New, that I could not read either of these Strains without some indignation, which no quality among men is so apt to raise in me as sufficiency, the worst composition out of the pride and ignorance of mankind. But these Two, being
15 not the only Persons of the Age that defend these Opinions, it may be worth examining how far either Reason or Experience can be allowed to plead or determin in their favour.

The Force of all that I have met with upon this Subject,
20 either in Talk or Writing is, First, as to Knowledge, That we must have more than the Ancients, because we have the Advantage both of theirs and our own, which is commonly illustrated by the Similitude of a Dwarfs standing upon a
Gyants shoulders, and seeing more or farther than he. Dwarfs
25 Next, as to Wit or Genius, that Nature being still the same, these must be much at a Rate in all Ages, at least in the same Clymates, as the Growth and Size of Plants and Animals commonly are; And if both these are allowed, they think the Cause is gained. But I cannot tell why we
30 should conclude that the Ancient Writers had not as much Advantage from the Knowledge of others that were Ancient to them, as we have from those that are Ancient to us. The Invention of Printing has not, perhaps, multiplied
35 there were Six Hundred Thousand in the Library of *

Ptolomy, we shall hardly pretend to equal it by any of ours, nor, perhaps, by all put together; I mean so many Originals that have lived any time, and thereby given Testimony of their having been thought worth preserving. For the Scribblers are infinite, that like Mushrooms or Flies are 5 born and dye in small circles of time; whereas Books, like Proverbs, receive their Chief Value from the Stamp and Esteem of Ages through which they have passed. Besides the account of this Library at *Alexandria*, and others very Voluminous in the lesser *Asia* and *Rome*, we have frequent 10 mention of Ancient Writers in many of those Books which we now call Ancient, both Philosophers and Historians. 'Tis true that besides what we have in Scripture concerning the Original and Progress of the *Jewish* Nation, all that passed in the rest of our World before the *Trojan* 15 War is either sunk in the depths of time, wrapt up in the mysteries of Fables, or so maimed by the want of Testimonies and loss of Authors that it appears to us in too obscure a shade to make any Judgment upon it. For the Fragments of *Manethon* about the Antiquities of *Egypt*, 20 the Relations in *Justin* concerning the *Scythian* Empire, and many others in *Herodotus* and *Diodorus Siculus*, as well as the Records of *China*, make such Excursions beyond the periods of time given us by the Holy Scriptures that we are not allowed to reason upon them. And this dis- 25 agreement it self, after so great a part of the World became Christian, may have contributed to the loss of many Ancient Authors. For *Solomon* tells us, even in his Time, of Writing many Books there was no end; and whoever considers the Subject and the Stile of *Job*, which by many 30 is thought more ancient than *Moses*, will hardly think it was written in an Age or Country that wanted either Books or Learning; and yet he speaks of the Ancients then, and their Wisdome, as we do now.

But if any should so very rashly and presumptuously con- 35

clude, That there were few Books before those we have either
 Extant or upon Record, yet that cannot argue there was
 no Knowledge or Learning before those periods of time,
 whereof they give us the short account. Books may be
 5 helps to Learning and Knowledge, and make it more
 common and diffused ; but I doubt whether they are neces-
 sary ones or no, or much advance any other Science beyond
 the particular Records of Actions or Registers of time ;
 and these, perhaps, might be as long preserved without
 10 them, by the care and exactness of Tradition in the long
 Successions of certain Races of men with whom they were
 intrusted. So in *Mexico* and *Peru*, before the least use or
 mention of Letters, there was remaining among them the
 knowledge of what had passed in those mighty Nations
 15 and Governments for many Ages. Whereas in *Ireland*,
 that is said to have flourished in Books and Learning
 before they had much Progress in *Gaul* or *Britany*, there
 are now hardly any Traces left of what passed there
 before the Conquest made of that Country by the *English*
 20 in *Henry* the Second's Time. A strange but plain Demon-
 stration how Knowledge and Ignorance, as well as Civility
 and Barbarism, may succeed each other in the several
 Countries of the World, how much better the Records of
 time may be kept by Tradition in one Country than Writing
 25 in another, and how much we owe to those Learned Lan-
 guages of *Greek* and *Latin*, without which, for ought I know,
 the World in all these *Western* Parts would hardly be known
 to have been above five or six Hundred Years old, nor any
 certainty remain of what passed in it before that time.

30 'Tis true, in the *Eastern* Regions, there seems to have
 been a general Custom of the Priests in each Country
 having been either by their own Choice, or by Design of
 the Governments, the perpetual Conservers of Knowledge
 and Story. Only in *China* this last was committed particu-
 35 larly to certain Officers of State, who were appointed or

continued upon every accession to that Crown to Register distinctly the times and memorable Events of each Reign. In *Ethiopia, Egypt, Caldea, Persia, Syria, Judea*, these Cares were committed wholly to the Priests, who were not less diligent in the Registers of Times and Actions than 5 in the Study and Successive Propagation thereby of all Natural Science and Philosophy. Whether this was managed by Letters, or Tradition, or by both, 'tis certain the Ancient Colledges, or Societies of Priests, were mighty Reservoirs or Lakes of Knowledge, into which some 10 streams entred perhaps every Age from the Observations or Inventions of any great Spirits or transcendent Genius's that happened to rise among them : And nothing was lost out of these Stores, since the part of conserving what others have gained, either in Knowledge or Empire, is as common 15 and easy as the other is hard and rare among men.

In these Soyls were planted and cultivated those mighty growths of *Astronomy, Astrology, Magick, Geometry, Natural Philosophy*, and Ancient Story. From these Sources *Orpheus, Homer, Lycurgus, Pythagoras, Plato*, and others of 20 the Ancients are acknowledged to have drawn all those Depths of Knowledge or Learning which have made them so Renowned in all succeeding Ages. I make a Distinction between these Two, taking Knowledge to be properly meant of things that are generally agreed to be true by 25 Consent of those that first found them out or have been since instructed in them, but Learning is the Knowledge of the different and contested Opinions of men in former Ages, and about which they have perhaps never agreed in any ; and this makes so much of one and so little of the 30 other in the World.

Now to judge, Whether the Ancients or Moderns can be probably thought to have made the greatest Progress in the Search and Discoveries of the vast Region of Truth and Nature, it will be worth inquiring, What Guides have 35

been used, and what Labours imploy'd, by the one and the other in these Noble Travels and Pursuits.

The Modern Scholars have their usual Recourse to the Universities of their Countries; some few, it may be, to those of their Neighbours; and this in quest of Books rather than Men for their Guides, though these are living and those in comparison but dead Instructors, which, like a Hand with an Inscription, can point out the straight way upon the Road, but can neither tell you the next Turnings, resolve your Doubts, or answer your Questions, like a Guide that has traced it over, and perhaps knows it as well as his Chamber. And who are these dead Guides we seek in our Journey? They are at best but some few Authors that remain among us of a great many that wrote in Greek and Latine from the Age of *Hypocrates* to that of *Marcus Antoninus*, which reaches not much above Six Hundred Years. Before that time I know none, besides some Poets, some Fables, and some few Epistles; and since that time I know very few that can pretend to be Authors, rather than Transcribers or Commentators of the Ancient Learning. Now, to consider at what Sources our Ancients drew their Water, and with what unwearied Pains, 'Tis evident *Thales* and *Pythagoras* were the Two Founders of the *Grecian* Philosophy: the First gave Beginning to the *Ionick* Sect and the other to the *Itallick*, out of which all the others celebrated in *Greece* or *Rome* were derived or composed. *Thales* was the First of the *Sophi*, or Wise men, Famous in *Greece*, and is said to have learned his *Astronomy*, *Geometry*, *Astrology*, *Theology*, in his Travels from his Country, *Miletus*, to *Ægypt*, *Phœnicia*, *Crete*, and *Delphos*. *Pythagoras* was the Father of Philosophers and of the Vertues, having in Modesty chosen the Name of a Lover of Wisdom rather than of Wise, and having first introduced the Names of the Four Cardinal Vertues, and given them the Place and Rank they have held ever since

in the World. Of these Two Mighty men remain no Writings at all, for those Golden Verses that go under the Name of *Pythagoras* are generally rejected as spurious, like many other Fragments of *Sybil's* or Old Poets, and some entire Poems that run with Ancient Names: Nor is it agreed, Whether he ever left any thing written to his Scholars or Contemporaries or whether all that learn't of him did it not by the Ear and Memory, and all that remained of him for some succeeding Ages were not by Tradition. But whether these ever writ or no, they were the Fountains out of which the following *Greek* Philosophers drew all those Streams that have since watered the Studies of the Learned World, and furnished the Voluminous Writings of so many Sects as passed afterwards under the common Name of Philosophers.

As there were Guides to those that we call Ancients, so there were others that were Guides to them, in whose Search they travelled far and laboured long.

There is nothing more agreed than, That all the Learning of the *Greeks* was deduced Originally from *Egypt* or *Phœnicia*; but, Whether theirs might not have flourished to that Degree it did by the Commerce of the *Ethiopians*, *Chaldeans*, *Arabians*, and *Indians* is not so evident, though I am very apt to believe it; and to most of these Regions some of the *Grecians* travelled in Search of those Golden Mines of Learning and Knowledge. Not to mention the Voyages of *Orpheus*, *Musæus*, *Lycurgus*, *Thales*, *Solon*, *Democritus*, *Herodotus*, *Plato*, and that vain Sophist, *Apollonius*, who was but an Ape of the Ancient Philosophers, I shall only trace those of *Pythagoras*, who seems of all others to have gone the farthest upon this Design, and to have brought home the greatest Treasures. He went first to *Egypt*, where he spent Two and Twenty Years in Study and Conversation among the several Colledges of Priests in *Memphis*, *Thebes*, and *Heliopolis*,

{and} was initiated in all their several Mysteries, in order to gain Admittance and Instruction in the Learning and Sciences that were there in their highest Ascendent. Twelve Years he spent in *Babylon* and in the Studies and
5 Learning of the Priests or *Magi* of the *Chaldeans*. Besides these long abodes in those Two Regions, celebrated for ancient Learning, and where one Author, according to their Calculations, says, He gained the Observations of innumerable Ages, He Travelled likewise upon the same
10 sent in *Æthiopia*, *Arabia*, *India*, to *Crete*, to *Delphos*, and to all the Oracles that were Renowned in any of these Regions.

What sort of Mortals some of those may have been that he went so far to seek, I shall only endeavour to Trace
15 out by the most ancient Accounts that are given of the *Indian Brachmans*, since those of the Learned or Sages in the other Countries occur more frequent in Story. These were all of one Race or Tribe, that was kept chaste from any other mixture, and were dedicated wholly to the
20 Service of the Gods, to the Studies of Wisdom and Nature, and to the Council of their Princes. There was not only particular care taken of their Birth and Nurture, but even from their Conception. For when a Woman among them was known to have Conceived, much thought
25 and diligence was employed about her Diet and Entertainments, so far as to furnish her with pleasant imaginations, to compose her mind and her sleeps with the best temper during the time she carried her Burthen. This I take to be a strain beyond all the *Grecian* Wit, or the Constitutions
30 even of their imaginary Law-givers, who began their cares of Mankind only after their Birth, and none before. Those of the *Brachmans* continued in the same Degree for their Education and Instruction, in which, and their Studies and Discipline of their Colledges, or separate abodes in Woods
35 and Fields, they spent Thirty Seven Years. Their

Learning and Institutions were unwritten, and only traditional among themselves by a perpetual Succession. Their Opinions in Natural Philosophy were, That the World was round, That it had a Beginning and would have an end, but reckoned both by immense periods of time ; 5 That the Author of it was a Spirit or a Mind that pervaded the whole Universe and was diffused through all the Parts of it. They held the Transmigration of Souls, and some used discourses of Infernal Mansions, in many things like those of *Plato*. Their Moral Philosophy 10 consisted chiefly in preventing all Diseases or Distempers of the Body, from which they esteemed the perturbation of mind in a great measure to arise. Then in composing the Mind, and exempting it from all anxious Cares, esteeming the troublesome and sollicitous thoughts about Past and 15 Future to be like so many Dreams, and no more to be regarded. They despised both life and death, pleasure and pain, or at least thought them perfectly indifferent. Their Justice was exact and exemplary, their Temperance so great that they lived upon Rice or Herbs, and upon 20 nothing that had sensitive Life. If they fell sick, they counted it such a Mark of Intemperance that they would frequently dye out of Shame and Sullenness, but many lived a Hundred and Fifty, and some Two Hundred Years.

25

Their Wisdom was so highly esteemed that some of them were always imployed to follow the Courts of their Kings, to advise them upon all Occasions, and instruct them in Justice and Piety ; and upon this Regard *Calanus* and some others are said to have followed the Camp of 30 *Alexander* after his Conquest of one of their Kings. The Magical Operations reported of them are so wonderful that they must either be wholly disbelieved, or will make easie way for the credit of all those that we so often meet with in the later Relations of the *Indies*. Above all the 35

rest, their Fortitude was most admirable in their Patience and Endurance of all Evils, of Pain, and of Death; some standing, sitting, lying, without any Motion, whole dayes together in the scorching Sun; others standing whole
5 nights upon one Leg, and holding up a heavy piece of Wood or Stone in both hands without ever moving, which might be done upon some sort of Penances usual among them. They frequently ended their Lives by their own Choice and not necessity, and most usually by Fire; some
10 upon Sickness, others upon Misfortunes, some upon meer satiety of Life; so *Calanus*, in *Alexander's* time, burn't himself publickly upon growing old and infirm, *Zormano-chages*, in the time of *Augustus*, upon his constant Health and Felicity, and to prevent his living so long as to fall
15 into Diseases or Misfortunes. These were the *Brachmans* of *India*, by the most Ancient Relations remaining of them, and which, Compared with our Modern, since Navigation and Trade have discovered so much of those vast Countries, make it easie to conjecture that the present *Banians* have
20 derived from them many of their Customs and Opinions, which are still very like them after the course of Two Thousand Years. For how long Nations, without the Changes introduced by Conquest, may continue in the same Customs, Institutions, and Opinions, will be easily observed
25 in the Stories of the *Peruvians* and *Mexicans*, of the *Chineses* and *Scythians*: These last being described by *Herodotus* to lodge always in Carts, and to feed commonly upon the Milk of Mares, as the *Tartars* are reported to do at this time in many Parts of those Vast Northern Regions.

30 From these Famous *Indians* it seems to me most probable that *Pythagoras* learn't, and transported into *Greece* and *Italy*, the greatest part of his Natural and Moral Philosophy, rather than from the *Ægyptians*, as is commonly supposed; For I have not observed any mention of the *Transmigration*
35 of Souls held among the *Ægyptians* more ancient than the

time of *Pythagoras*: On the contrary, *Orpheus* is said to have brought out of *Egypt* all his Mystical Theology, with the Stories of the *Stygian Lake*, *Charon*, the Infernal Judges, which were wrought up by the succeeding Poets (with a Mixture of the *Cretan Tales* or Traditions) into that 5 part of the *Pagan Religion* so long observed by the *Greeks* and *Romans*. Now, 'tis obvious that this was in all parts very different from the *Pythagorean* Opinion of Transmigration, which, though it was preserved long among some of the succeeding Philosophers, yet never entered into the 10 vulgar Belief of *Greece* or *Italy*.

Nor does it seem unlikely that the *Ægyptians* themselves might have drawn much of their Learning from the *Indians*, for they are observed in some Authors to have done it from the *Æthiopians*; and Chronologers, I think, agree that 15 these were a Colony that came anciently from the River *Indus*, and planted themselves upon that Part of *Africa* which from their Name was afterward called *Æthiopia*, and in probability brought their Learning and their Customs with them. The *Phœnicians* are likewise said to have been 20 anciently a Colony that came from the *Red Sea*, and planted themselves upon the *Mediterranean*, and from thence spread so far the Fame of their Learning and their Navigations.

To strengthen this Conjecture of much Learning being derived from such remote and ancient Fountains as the 25 *Indies* and perhaps *China*, it may be asserted with great Evidence that, though we know little of the Antiquities of *India* beyond *Alexander's* time, yet those of *China* are the oldest that any where pretend to any fair Records: For these are agreed by the Missionary Jesuits to extend so 30 far above Four Thousand Years, and with such Appearance of clear and undeniable Testimonies, that those Religious Men themselves, rather than question their Truth by finding them contrary to the vulgar Chronology of the Scripture, are content to have recourse to that of the 35

Septuagint, and thereby to salve the Appearances in those Records of the *Chineses*. Now though we have been deprived the knowledge of what Course Learning may have held, and to what heights it may have soared, in that vast
5 Region, and during so great Antiquity of time, by reason of the Savage Ambition of one of their Kings, who, desirous to begin the Period of History from his own Reign, ordered all Books to be burnt, except those of Physick and Agriculture,—so that what we have remaining besides of that
10 wise and ancient Nation is but what was either by chance or by private Industry rescued out of that publick Calamity, among which were a Copy of the Records and Successions of the Crown,—yet it is observable and agreed that, as the Opinions of the Learned among them are at present, so
15 they were anciently divided into two Sects, whereof one held the Transmigration of Souls, and the other the Eternity of Matter, comparing the World to a great Mass of Metal out of which some Parts are continually made up into a Thousand various Figures, and after certain Periods
20 melted down again into the same Mass. That there were many Volumes written of old in Natural Philosophy among them. That near the Age of *Socrates* lived their Great and Renowned *Confutius*, who began the same Design of reclaiming men from the useless and endless Speculations
25 of Nature to those of Morality. But with this Difference, that the Bent of the *Grecian* seemed to be chiefly upon the Happiness of private Men or Families, but that of the *Chinese* upon the good Temperament and Felicity of such Kingdoms or Governments as that was, and is known to
30 have continued for several Thousands of Years, and may be properly called a Government of Learned men, since no other are admitted into Charges of the State.

For my own part, I am much inclined to believe that, in these Remote Regions, not only *Pythagoras* learn't the
35 first Principles both of his Natural and Moral Philosophy,

but that those of *Democritus*, who Travelled into *Ægypt*, *Caldæa*, and *India*, and whose Doctrines were after improved by *Epicurus*, might have been derived from the same Fountains, and that long before them both *Lycurgus*, who likewise Travelled into *India*, brought from thence 5 also the Chief Principles of his Laws and Politicks, so much Renowned in the World.

For whoever observes the Account already given of the Ancient *Indian* and *Chinese* Learning and Opinions will easily find among them the Seeds of all these *Grecian* 10 Productions and Institutions: As the Transmigration of Souls and the four Cardinal Vertues; The long Silence enjoyed his Scholars, and Propagation of their Doctrines by Tradition rather than Letters, and Abstinence from all Meats that had Animal Life, introduced by *Pythagoras*; 15 The Eternity of Matter, with perpetual changes of Form, the Indolence of Body, and Tranquility of Mind, by *Epicurus*; And among those of *Lycurgus*, the care of Education from the Birth of Children, the *Austere* Temperance of Diet, the patient endurance of Toil and 20 Pain, the neglect or contempt of Life, the use of Gold and Silver only in their Temples, the Defence of Commerce with Strangers, and several others, by him established among the *Spartans*, seem all to be wholly *Indian*, and different from any Race or Vein of Thought and Imagina- 25 tion that have ever appeared in *Greece*, either in that Age or any since.

It may look like a Paradox to deduce Learning from Regions accounted commonly so barbarous and rude. And 'tis true the generality of People were always so in 30 those *Eastern* Countries, and their lives wholly turned to Agriculture, to Mechanicks, or to Trades; but this does not hinder particular Races or Successions of Men, the design of whose thought and time was turned wholly to Learning and Knowledge, from having been what they are 35

reepresented and what they deserve to be esteemed, since among the *Gauls*, the *Goths*, and the *Peruvians* themselves, there have been such Races of Men under the Names of *Druids*, *Bards*, *Amautas*, *Runers*, and other barbarous
5 Appellations.

Besides, I know no Circumstances like to Contribute more to the advancement of Knowledge and Learning among men than exact Temperance in their Races, great
pureness of Air, and equality of Clymate, long Tranquility
10 of Empire or Government: And all these we may justly allow to those *Eastern* Regions more than any others we are acquainted with, at least till the Conquests made by the *Tartars* upon both *India* and *China* in the later Centuries. However, it may be as pardonable to derive some Parts of
15 Learning from thence as to go so far for the Game of *Chess*, which some Curious and Learned men have deduced from *India* into *Europe* by Two several Roads, that is, by *Persia* into *Greece*, and by *Arabia* into *Africk* and *Spain*.

Thus much I thought might be allowed me to say, for
20 the giving some Idæa of what those Sages or Learned Men were, or may have been, who were Ancients to those that are Ancients to us. Now to observe what these have been is more easy and obvious. The most ancient *Grecians* that we are at all acquainted with after *Lycurgus*, who was
25 certainly a great Philosopher as well as Law-giver, were the seven Sages. Tho' the Court of *Cræsus* is said to have been much resorted to by the Sophists of *Greece*, in the happy beginnings of his Reign. And some of these seven seem to have brought most of the Sciences out of
30 *Ægypt* and *Phœnicia* into *Greece*, particularly those of *Astronomy*, *Astrology*, *Geometry*, and *Arithmetick*. These were soon followed by *Pythagoras*, who seems to have introduced Natural and Moral Philosophy, and by several of his Followers, both in *Greece* and *Italy*. But of all these
35 there remains nothing in Writing now among us, so that

Hippocrates, Plato, and Xenophon are the first *Philosophers* whose works have escaped the injuries of time. But that we may not conclude the first Writers we have of the *Grecians* were the first Learned or Wise among them, We shall find upon inquiry that the more ancient Sages of 5 *Greece* appear, by the Characters remaining of them, to have been much the greater Men. They were generally Princes or Law-givers of their Countries, or at least offered and invited to be so, either of their own or of others, that desired them to frame or reform their several Institutions 10 of Civil Government. They were commonly excellent Poets and great Physicians; they were so learned in Natural Philosophy that they fore-told not only Eclipses in the Heavens, but Earthquakes at Land and Storms at Sea, great Drowths and great Plagues, much Plenty or 15 much Scarcity of certain sorts of Fruits or Grain, not to mention the Magical Powers attributed to several of them to allay Storms, to raise Gales, to appease Commotions of People, to make Plagues cease,—which qualities, whether upon any ground of Truth or no, yet if well believed must 20 have raised them to that strange height they were at, of common esteem and honour, in their own and succeeding Ages.

By all this may be determined whether our *Moderns* or our *Ancients* may have had the greater and the better 25 Guides, and which of them have taken the greater pains, and with the more application in the pursuit of Knowledge. And I think it is enough to shew that the advantage we have from those we call the *Ancients* may not be greater than what they had from those that were so to them. 30

But after all, I do not know whether the high flights of Wit and Knowledge, like those of Power and of Empire in the World, may not have been made by the pure Native Force of Spirit or Genius in some single men, rather than by any derived strength among them, however encreased 35

by Succession, and whether they may not have been the Achievements of Nature, rather than the improvements of Art. Thus the Conquests of *Ninus* and *Semiramis*, of *Alexander* and *Tamerlane*, which I take to have been the greatest Recorded in Story, were at their height in those Persons that began them, and so far from being encreased by their Successors that they were not preserved in their extent and vigour by any of them, grew weaker in every hand they passed through, or were divided into many that set up for great Princes out of several small ruins of the First Empires, till they withered away in time, or were lost by the change of Names and Forms of Families or of Governments.

Just the same Fate seems to have attended the highest flights of Learning and of Knowledge that are upon our Registers. *Thales*, *Pythagoras*, *Democritus*, *Hippocrates*, *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Epicurus* were the first mighty Conquerors of Ignorance in our World, and made greater progresses in the several Empires of Science than any of their Successors have been since able to reach. These have hardly ever pretended more than to learn what the others taught, to remember what they invented; and not able to compass that it self, they have set up for Authors upon some parcels of those great Stocks, or else have contented themselves only to comment upon those Texts, and make the best Copies they could after those Originals.

I have long thought that the different abilities of Men, which we call Wisdom or Prudence, for the conduct of Publick Affairs or Private Life, grow directly out of that little grain of Intellect or Good Sense which they bring with them into the World, and that the defect of it in Men comes from some want in their Conception or Birth.

—*Dixitque semel Nascentibus Author,
Quicquid scire licet.*—

And though this may be improved or impaired in some degree by accidents of Education, of Study, and of Conversation or Business, yet it cannot go beyond the reach of its Native Force, no more than Life can beyond the period to which it was destined by the strength or 5 weakness of the seminal Vertue.

If these speculations should be true, then I know not what advantages we can pretend to modern Knowledge, by any we receive from the Ancients. Nay, 'tis possible men may lose rather than gain by them, may lessen the 10 Force and Growth of their own Genius by constraining and forming it upon that of others, may have less Knowledge of their own for contenting themselves with that of those before them. So a Man that only Translates shall never be a Poet, nor a Painter that only Copies, nor a 15 Swimmer that Swims always with Bladders. So People that trust wholly to others Charity, and without Industry of their own, will be always poor. Besides, who can tell whether Learning may not even weaken Invention in a man that has great Advantages from Nature and Birth, 20 whether the weight and number of so many other mens thoughts and notions may not suppress his own, or hinder the motion and agitation of them from which all Invention arises; As heaping on Wood, or too many Sticks, or too close together, suppresses and sometimes 25 quite extinguishes a little spark that would otherwise have grown up to a noble Flame. The strength of mind as well as of body grows more from the warmth of Exercise than of Cloaths; nay, too much of this Foreign heat rather makes Men faint, and their Constitutions tender or 30 weaker than they would be without them. Let it come about how it will, if we are Dwarfs, we are still so, though we stand upon a Gyant's shoulders; and even so placed, yet we see less than he, if we are naturally shorter sighted, or if we do not look as much about us, or if we are dazled 35

with the height, which often happens from weakness either of Heart or Brain.

In the growth and stature of Souls as well as Bodies, the common productions are of indifferent sizes, that 5 occasion no gazing nor no wonder. But (tho') there are or have been sometimes Dwarfs and sometimes Gyants in the World, yet it does not follow that there must be such in every Age nor in every Country. This we can no more conclude than that there never have been any, 10 because there are none now, at least in the compass of our present Knowledge or Inquiry. As I believe there may have been Gyants at some time and some place or other in the World, of such a stature as may not have been equalled perhaps again in several Thousands of 15 Years or in any other Parts, so there may be Gyants in Wit and Knowledge, of so over-grown a size as not to be equalled again in many successions of Ages or any compass of Place or Country. Such, I am sure, *Lucretius* esteems and describes *Epicturus* to have been, and to have risen like 20 a Prodigy of Invention and Knowledge, such as had not been before nor was like to be again; and I know not why others of the Ancients may not be allowed to have been as great in their kinds, and to have built as high, though upon different Schemes or Foundations. Because 25 there is a Stag's head at *Amboyse* of a most prodigious size, and a large Table at *Memorancy* cut out of the thickness of a Vine-stock, is it necessary that there must be every Age such a Stag in every great Forest or such a Vine in every large Vineyard; or that the Productions 30 of Nature in any kind must be still alike, or something near it, because Nature is still the same? May there not many circumstances concur to one production that do not to any other in one or many Ages? In the growth of a Tree, there is the native strength of the seed, both from 35 the kind and from the perfection of its ripening, and

from the health and vigour of the Plant that bore it. There is the degree of strength and excellence in that Vein of Earth where it first took root; There is a propriety of Soyl, suited to the kind of Tree that grows in it; there is a great favour or dis-favour to its growth from accidents of Water and of Shelter, from the kindness or unkindness of Seasons, till it be past the need or the danger of them. All these, and perhaps many others, joyned with the propitiousness of Clymat to that sort of Tree, and the length of Age it shall stand and grow, may produce an Oak, a Fig, or a Plane-tree, that shall deserve to be renowned in Story, and shall not perhaps be parallel'd in other Countrys or Times.

May not the same have happened in the production, growth, and size of Wit and Genius in the World, or in some Parts or Ages of it, and from many more circumstances that contributed towards it than what may concur to the stupendious growth of a Tree or Animal? May there not have been, in *Greece* or *Italy* of old, such prodigies of Invention and Learning in *Philosophy*, *Mathematicks*, *Physick*, *Oratory*, *Poetry*, that none has ever since approached them, as well as there were in *Painting*, *Statuary*, *Architecture*, and yet their unparallel'd and inimitable excellencies in these are undisputed?

Science and Arts have run their circles, and had their periods in the several Parts of the World. They are generally agreed to have held their course from *East* to *West*, to have begun in *Chaldæa* and *Ægypt*, to have been Transplanted from thence to *Greece*, from *Greece* to *Rome*, to have sunk there, and after many Ages to have revived from those Ashes, and to have sprung up again, both in *Italy* and other more *Western* Provinces of *Europe*. When *Chaldæa* and *Ægypt* were Learned and Civil, *Greece* and *Rome* were as rude and barbarous as all *Ægypt* and *Syria* now are and have been long. When *Greece* and

Rome were at their heights in Arts and Science, *Gaul*, *Germany*, *Britain* were as ignorant and barbarous as any Parts of *Greece* or *Turkey* can be now.

These and greater changes are made in the several
5 Countries of the World and courses of time by the
Revolutions of Empire, the Devastations of Armies, the
Cruelties of Conquering, and the Calamities of enslaved
Nations, by the violent inundations of Water in some
Countries, and the Cruel Ravages of Plagues in others.
10 These sorts of accidents sometimes lay them so waste
that, when they rise again, 'tis from such low beginnings
that they look like New-Created Regions, or growing out
of the Original State of Mankind, and without any
Records or Remembrances beyond certain short periods
15 of time. Thus that vast Continent of *Norway* is said to
have been so wholly desolated by a Plague about Eight
or Nine Hundred Years ago, that it was for some Ages
following a very Desart, and since all over-grown with
Wood; And *Ireland* was so spoiled and wasted by the
20 Conquests of the *Scutes* and *Danes*, that there hardly
remains any Story or Tradition what that Island was,
how Planted or Governed, above Five Hundred Years
ago. What changes have been made by Violent Storms
and Inundations of the Sea in the Maritime Provinces of
25 the *Low-Countrys* is hard to know, or to believe what is
told, nor how ignorant they have left us of all that passed
there before a certain and short period of time.

The Accounts of many other Countries would, perhaps,
as hardly and as late have waded out of the Depths of
30 Time and Gulphs of Ignorance, had it not been for the
Assistance of those two Languages to which we owe all
we have of Learning or Ancient Records in the World.
For whether we have any thing of the Old *Chaldaean*,
Hebrew, *Arabian* that is truly Genuine, or more Ancient
35 than the *Augustan* Age, I am much in doubt; yet 'tis

probable the vast *Alexandrian* Library must have chiefly consisted of Books composed in those Languages, with the *Ægyptian*, *Syrian*, and *Æthiopick*, or at least Translated out of them by the Care of the *Ægyptian* Kings or Priests, as the *Old Testament* was, wherein the *Septuagints* 5 employed left their Name to that Famous Translation.

'Tis very true and just, All that is said of the mighty Progress that Learning and Knowledge have made in these *Western* Parts of *Europe* within these hundred and fifty Years; but that does not conclude it must be at 10 greater Heighth than it had been in other Countries, where it was growing much longer Periods of Time; it argues more how low it was then amongst us rather than how high it is now.

Upon the Fall of the *Roman* Empire, almost all Learn- 15 ing was buried in its Ruines: The *Northern* Nations that Conquered, or rather overwhelmed it by their Numbers, were too barbarous to preserve the Remains of Learning or Civility more carefully than they did those of Statuary or Architecture, which fell before their Brutish Rage. 20 The *Saracens*, indeed, from their Conquests of *Ægypt*, *Syria*, and *Greece* carried home great Spoils of Learning as well as other Riches, and gave the Original of all that Knowledge which flourished for some time among the *Arabians*, and has since been copied out of many Authors 25 among them, as theirs had been out of those of the Countries they had subdued; nor, indeed, do Learning, Civility, Morality seem any where to have made a greater Growth in so short a Time than in that Empire, nor to have flourished more than in the Reign of their Great 30 *Almanzor*, under whose Victorious Ensigns *Spain* was Conquered by the *Moors*; but the *Goths*, and all the rest of those *Scythian* Swarms that from beyond the *Danube* and the *Elb*, under so many several Names, over-run all *Europe*, took very hardly and very late 35

any Tincture of the Learning and Humanity that had flourished in the several Regions of it, under the Protection and by the Example and Instructions of the *Romans* that had so long possessed them. Those *Northern Nations* 5 were indeed easier induced to embrace the Religion of those they had subdued, and by their Devotion gave great Authority and Revenues and thereby Ease to the Clergy, both Secular and Regular, through all their Conquests. Great Numbers of the better sort among the 10 Oppressed Natives, finding this vein among them, and no other way to be safe and quiet under such rough Masters, betook themselves to the Profession and Assemblies of Religious Orders and Fraternities, and among those onely were preserved all the poor Remainders of Learning 15 in these several Countries.

But these good men either contented themselves with their Devotion or with the Ease of quiet Lives, or else employed their Thoughts and Studies to raise and maintain the Esteem and Authority of that Sacred Order to 20 which they owed the Safety and Repose, the Wealth and Honour they enjoyed. And in this they so well succeeded, that the Conquerors were governed by those they had subdued, the Greatest Princes by the Meanest Priests, and the Victorious *Franks* and *Lombard Kings* 25 fell at the feet of the *Roman Prelates*.

Whilst the Clergy were busied in these Thoughts or Studies, the better sort among the Laity were wholly turned to Arms and to Honour, the meaner sort to Labour or to Spoil; Princes taken up with Wars among them- 30 selves, or in those of the Holy Land, or between the Popes and Emperors, upon Disputes of the Ecclesiastical and Secular Powers; Learning so little in use among them that few could write or read, besides those of the Long Robes. During this Course of Time, which lasted 35 many Ages in the *Western Parts of Europe*, The *Greek*

Tongue was wholly lost, and the Purity of the *Roman* to that degree that what remained of it was onely a certain Jargon rather than Latin, that passed among the *Monks* and *Fryers* who were at all Learned, and among the Students of the several Universities, which served to 5 carry them to *Rome* in pursuit of Preferments or Causes depending there, and little else.

When the *Turks* took *Constantinople* about two hundred Years ago, and soon after possessed themselves of all *Greece*, the poor Natives, fearing the Tyranny of those 10 cruel Masters, made their Escapes in great Numbers to the Neighbouring parts of Christendom, some by the *Austrian* Territories into *Germany*, others by the *Venetian* into *Italy* and *France*; several that were Learned among these *Grecians*, and brought many Ancient Books with 15 them in that Language, began to teach it in these Countries, first to gain Subsistence, and afterwards Favour in some Princes or Great mens Courts, who began to take a Pleasure or Pride in countenancing Learned men. Thus began the Restoration of Learning 20 in these Parts with that of the *Greek* Tongue; and soon after, *Reuchlyn* and *Erasmus* began that of the purer and ancient Latin. After them *Buchanan* carried it, I think, to the greatest Heighth of any of the Moderns before or since. The *Monkish* Latin, upon this Return, was 25 laughed out of doors, and remains only in the Inns of *Germany* or *Poland*; and with the Restitution of these two Noble Languages and the Books remaining of them, which many Princes and Prelates were curious to recover and collect, Learning of all sorts began to thrive in these 30 *Western* Regions, and since that time, and in the first succeeding Century, made perhaps a greater growth than in any other that we know of in such a compass of Time, considering into what Depths of Ignorance it was sunk before.

But why from thence should be concluded, That it has out-grown all that was Ancient, I see no Reason. If a Strong and Vigorous man at Thirty Years old should fall into a Consumption, and so draw on till Fifty in the extreme Weakness and Infirmary, after that should begin to Recover Health till Sixty, so as to be again as Strong as men usually are at that Age, It might perhaps truly be said in that case that he had grown more in Strength that last Ten Years than any others of his Life, but not that he was grown to more Strength and Vigour than he had at Thirty Years old.

But what are the Sciences wherein we pretend to excel? I know of no New Philosophers that have made Entries upon that Noble Stage for Fifteen Hundred Years past, unless *Des Cartes* and *Hobbs* should pretend to it, of whom I shall make no Critick here, but only say, That by what appears of Learned Mens Opinions in this Age, they have by no means eclipsed the Lustre of *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Epicurus*, or others of the Ancients. For Grammar or Rhetorick, no man ever disputed it with them, nor for Poetry, that ever I heard of, besides the New French Author I have mentioned, and against whose Opinion there could, I think, never have been given stronger Evidence than by his own Poems, Printed together with that Treatise.

There is nothing new in *Astronomy* to vye with the Ancients, unless it be the *Copernican* System; nor in *Physick*, unless *Hervy's* Circulation of the blood. But whether either of these be modern discoveries, or derived from old Fountains, is disputed: Nay, it is so, too, whether they are true or no; for though reason may seem to favour them more than the contrary Opinion, yet sense can very hardly allow them; and to satisfie Mankind, both these must concur. But if they are true, yet these two great discoveries have made no change

Body
(always
argued
not
proven)

10
20

in the conclusions of *Astronomy*, nor in the practise of Physick, and so have been of little use to the World, though perhaps of much honour to the Authors.

What are become of the Charms of Musick, by which Men and Beasts, Fishes, Fowls, and Serpents were so frequently Enchanted, and their very Natures changed ; By which the Passions of men were raised to the greatest heighth and violence, and then as suddenly appeased, so as they might be justly said to be turned into Lyons or Lambs, into Wolves or into Harts, by the Power and Charms of this admirable Art? 'Tis agreed by the Learned that the Science of Musick, so admired of the Ancients, is wholly lost in the World, and that what we have now is made up out of certain Notes that fell into the fancy or observation of a poor *Fryar* in chanting his Mattins. So as those Two Divine Excellencies of Musick and Poetry are grown in a manner to be little more, but the one Fidling, and the other Rhyming ; and are indeed very worthy the ignorance of the Fryer and the barbarousness of the *Goths* that introduced them among us.

What have we remaining of *Magick*, by which the *Indians*, the *Chaldeans*, the *Ægyptians* were so renowned, and by which effects so wonderful and to common men so astonishing were produced, as made them have recourse to Spirits or Supernatural Powers for some account of their strange Operations? By *Magick* I mean some excelling knowledge of Nature and the various Powers and Qualities in its several productions, and the application of certain Agents to certain Patients, which by force of some peculiar qualities produce effects very different from what fall under vulgar Observation or Comprehension. These are by ignorant People called *Magick* and *Conjuring*, and such like Terms, and an Account of them much about as wise is given by the

common Learned, from *Sympathies*, *Antipathies*, *Idiosyncrasys*, *Talismans*, and some scraps or Terms left us by the *Ægyptians* or *Grecians* of the Ancient Magick; but the Science seems, with several others, to be wholly lost.

5 What Traces have we left of that admirable Science or Skill in Architecture, by which such stupendious Fabricks have been raised of old and so many of the Wonders of the World been produced, and which are so little approached by our Modern Atchievements of
 10 this sort, that they hardly fall within our Imagination? Not to mention the Walls and Palace of *Babylon*, the Pyramids of *Egypt*, the Tomb of *Mausolus*, or *Collosse* of *Rhodes*, the Temples and Palaces of *Greece* and *Rome*: What can be more admirable in this kind than the *Roman*
 15 Theatres, their Aqueducts, and their Bridges, among which that of *Trajan* over the *Danube* seems to have been the last Flight of the Ancient Architecture? The stupendious Effects of this Science sufficiently evince at what Heighths the Mathematicks were among the Ancients;
 20 but if this be not enough, who-ever would be satisfied need go no further than the Siege of *Syracuse*, and that mighty Defence made against the *Roman* Power, more by the wonderful Science and Arts of *Archimedes*, and almost Magical Force of his Engines, than by all the
 25 Strength of the City, or Number and Bravery of the Inhabitants.

The greatest Invention that I know of in later Ages has been that of the Load-Stone, and consequently the greatest Improvement has been made in the Art of Navigation; yet there must be allowed to have been something
 30 stupendious in the Numbers and in the Built of their Ships and Gallies of old; and the Skill of Pylots, from the Observation of the Stars in the more serene Clymates, may be judged by the Navigations, so celebrated in Story,
 35 of the *Tyrians* and *Carthagenians*, not to mention other

Nations. However, 'tis to this we owe the Discovery and Commerce of so many vast Countries which were very little if at all known to the Ancients, and the experimental Proof of this Terrestrial Globe, which was before only Speculation, but has since been surrounded 5 by the Fortune and Boldness of several Navigators. From this great though fortuitous Invention, and the consequence thereof, it must be allowed that Geography is mightily advanced in these latter Ages. The Vast Continents of *China*, the *East* and *West Indies*, the long 10 Extent and Coasts of *Africa*, with the numberless Islands belonging to them, have been hereby introduced into our Acquaintance and our Maps, and great Increases of Wealth and Luxury, but none of Knowledge, brought among us, further than the Extent and scituation of 15 Country, the customs and manners of so many original Nations, which we call Barbarous, and I am sure have treated them as if we hardly esteem them to be a part of Mankind. I do not doubt but many Great and more Noble Uses would have been made of such Conquests 20 or Discoveries, if they had fallen to the share of the *Greeks* and *Romans* in those Ages when Knowledge and Fame were in as great Request as endless Gains and Wealth are among us now; and how much greater Discoveries might have been made by such Spirits as 25 theirs is hard to guess. I am sure ours, though great, yet look very imperfect, as to what the Face of this Terrestrial Globe would probably appear, if they had been pursued as far as we might justly have expected from the Progresses of Navigation since the Use of the 30 Compass, which seems to have been long at a stand. How little has been performed of what has been so often and so confidently promised of a *North-West* Passage to the *East* of *Tartary* and *North* of *China*! How little do we know of the Lands on that side of the 35

Magellan Straits that lye towards the *South Pole*, which may be vast Islands or Continents for ought any can yet aver, though that Passage was so long since found out! Whether *Japan* be Island or Continent, with some Parts
5 of *Tartary* on the *North* side, is not certainly agreed. The Lands of *Yedso* upon the *North-East* Continent have been no more than Coasted, and whether they may not joyn to the *Northern* Continent of *America* is by some doubted.

10 But the Defect or Negligence seems yet to have been greater towards the *South*, where we know little beyond Thirty Five Degrees, and that only by the Necessity of doubling the Cape of *Goodhope* in our *East-India* Voyages; yet a Continent has been long since found out within
15 Fifteen Degrees to *South*, and about the Length of *Java*, which is marked by the Name of *New Holland* in the Maps, and to what Extent none knows, either to the *South*, the *East*, or the *West*; yet the Learned have been of Opinion, That there must be a Ballance of Earth on
20 that side of the Line, in some Proportion to what there is on the other, and that it cannot be all *Sea* from Thirty Degrees to the *South-Pole*, since we have found Land to above Sixty Degrees towards the *North*. But our Navigators that way have been confined to the Roads of
25 Trade, and our Discoveries bounded by what we can manage to a certain Degree of Gain. And I have heard it said among the *Dutch* that their *East-India*-Company have long since forbidden, and under the greatest Penalties, any further Attempts of discovering that
30 Continent, having already more Trade in those Parts than they can turn to Account, and fearing some more Populous Nation of *Europe* might make great Establishments of Trade in some of those unknown Regions which might ruine or impair what they have already in the
35 *Indies*.

Thus we are lame still in Geography it self, which we might have expected to run up to so much greater Perfection by the Use of the Compass ; and it seems to have been little advanced these last Hundred Years. So far have we been from improving upon those Advantages we 5 have received from the Knowledge of the Ancients, that since the late Restoration of Learning and Arts among us, our first Flights seem to have been the highest, and a sudden Damp to have fallen upon our Wings, which has hindered us from rising above certain Heights. The 10 Arts of Painting and Statuary began to revive with Learning in *Europe*, and made a great but short Flight, so as for these last Hundred Years we have not had One Master in either of them who deserved a Rank with those that flourished in that short Period after they began 15 among us.

It were too great a Mortification to think, That the same Fate has happened to us, even in our Modern Learning, as if the Growth of that, as well as of Natural Bodies, had some short Periods beyond which it could 20 not reach, and after which it must begin to decay. It falls in one Country or one Age, and rises again in others, but never beyond a certain Pitch. One Man or one Country at a certain Time runs a great Length in some certain Kinds of Knowledge, but lose as much 25 Ground in others that were perhaps as useful and as valuable. There is a certain Degree of Capacity in the greatest Vessel, and when 'tis full, if you pour in still, it must run out some way or other ; and the more it runs out on one side, the less runs out at the other. So the 30 greatest Memory, after a certain Degree, as it learns or retains more of some Things or Words, loses and forgets as much of others. The largest and deepest Reach of Thought, the more it pursues some certain Subjects, the more it neglects others.

Besides, few men or none excel in all Faculties of Mind. A great Memory may fail of Invention, both may want Judgment to Digest or Apply what they Remember or Invent. Great Courage may want Caution, great
5 Prudence may want Vigour, yet all are necessary to make a great Commander. But how can a man hope to excel in all qualities, when some are produced by the heat, others by the coldness, of Brain and Temper? The abilities of man must fall short on one side or other,
10 like too scanty a Blanket when you are a Bed: if you pull it upon your Shoulders, you leave your Feet bare; if you thrust it down upon your Feet, your Shoulders are uncovered.

But what would we have, unless it be other Natures
15 and Beings than God Almighty has given us? The heighth of our Statures may be six or seven Foot, and we would have it sixteen; the length of our Age may reach to a hundred Years, and we would have it a thousand. We are born to grovel upon the Earth, and
20 we would fain soar up to the Skies. We cannot comprehend the growth of a Kernel or Seed, the Frame of an *Ant* or *Bee*; we are amazed at the Wisdom of the one and Industry of the other, and yet we will know the Substance, the Figure, the Courses, the Influences of all
25 those Glorious Cœlestial Bodies, and the end for which they were made; we pretend to give a clear Account how Thunder and Lightning (that great Artillery of God Almighty) is produced, and we cannot comprehend how the Voice of a man is Framed, that poor little noise we make
30 every time we speak. The motion of the Sun is plain and evident to some Astronomers, and of the Earth to others, yet we none of us know which of them moves, and meet with many seeming impossibilities in both, and beyond the fathom of human reason or comprehension. Nay,
35 we do not so much as know what Motion is, nor how a

stone moves from our hand when we throw it cross the Street. Of all these that most Ancient and Divine Writer gives the best Account in that short Satyr, *Vain man would fain be wise, when he is born like a wild Asses Colt.*

But God be thanked, his Pride is greater than his ignorance ; and what he wants in Knowledge he supplies by Sufficiency. When he has looked about him as far as he can, he concludes there is no more to be seen ; when he is at the end of his Line, he is at the bottom of the Ocean ; when he has shot his best, he is sure none ever did nor ever can shoot better or beyond it. His own Reason is the certain measure of truth, his own Knowledge, of what is possible in Nature, though his mind and his thoughts change every seven Years as well as his strength and his features ; nay, though his Opinions change every Week or every Day, yet he is sure, or at least confident, that his present thoughts and conclusions are just and true, and cannot be deceived ; And among all the miseries to which mankind is born and subjected in the whole course of his life, he has this one Felicity to Comfort and Support him, That in all ages, in all things, every man is always in the right. A Boy of fifteen is wiser than his Father at forty, the meanest Subject than his Prince or Governours ; and the modern Scholars, because they have for a Hundred Years past learned their Lesson pretty well, are much more knowing than the Ancients, their Masters.

But let it be so, and proved by good reasons, Is it so by experience too ? Have the Studies, the Writings, the Productions of *Gresham* Colledge, or the late Academies of *Paris*, outshined or eclypsed the Lycæum of *Plato*, the Academy of *Aristotle*, the Stoa of *Zeno*, the Garden of *Epicurus* ? Has *Hervey* outdone *Hippocrates*, or *Wilkins*, *Archimedes* ? Are *D'avila's* and *Strada's* Histories beyond those of *Herodotus* and *Livy* ? Are *Sleyden's* Commen- 35

taries beyond those of *Cæsar*? The Flights of *Boileau* above those of *Virgil*? If all this must be allowed, I will then yield *Gondibert* to have excelled *Homer*, as it pretended, and the modern *French* Poetry, all that of the
 5 Ancients. And yet, I think, it may be as reasonably said, That the Plays in *Moor-Fields* are beyond the *Olympick* Games; A *Welsh* or *Irish* Harp excels those of *Orpheus* and *Arion*; The Pyramid in *London*, those of *Memphis*; and the *French* Conquests in *Flanders* are greater than
 10 those of *Alexander* and *Cæsar*, as their Opera's and Panegyrics would make us believe.

But the Consideration of Poetry ought to be a Subject by it self. For the Books we have in Prose, Do any of the modern we Converse with appear of such a Spirit and
 15 Force as if they would live longer than the Ancient have done? If our Wit and Eloquence, our knowledge or Inventions would deserve it, yet our Languages would not; there is no hope of their lasting long, nor of any thing in them; they change every Hundred Years so as
 20 to be hardly known for the same, or any thing of the former Styles to be endured by the later; so as they can no more last like the Ancients, than excellent Carvings in Wood like those in Marble or Brass.

The three modern Tongues most esteemed are *Italian*,
 25 *Spanish*, and *French*, all imperfect Dialects of the Noble *Roman*: first mingled and corrupted with the harsh Words and Terminations of those many different and barbarous Nations by whose Invasions and Excursions the *Roman* Empire was long infested, They were afterwards
 30 made up into these several Languages, by long and popular use, out of those ruins and corruptions of *Latin* and the prevailing Languages of those Nations to which these several Provinces came in time to be most and longest subjected, as the *Goths* and *Moors* in *Spain*, the
 35 *Goths* and *Lombards* in *Italy*, the *Franks* in *Gaul*, besides

11 mit
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a mingle of those Tongues which were Original to *Gaul* and to *Spain* before the *Roman* Conquests and Establishments there. Of these there may be some Remainders in *Biscay* or the *Asturias*; but I doubt whether there be any of the old *Gallick* in *France*, the Subjection there having 5 been more Universal, both to the *Romans* and *Franks*. But I do not find the Mountainous Parts on the *North* of *Spain* were ever wholly subdued or formerly Governed either by the *Romans*, *Goths*, or *Saracens*, no more than *Wales* by *Romans*, *Saxons*, or *Normans*, after their Con- 10 quests in our Islands: which has preserved the ancient *Biscayn* and *British* more entire than any Native Tongue of other Provinces where the *Roman* and *Gothick* or *Northern* Conquests reached and were for any time Established. 15

'Tis easy to imagine how imperfect Copies these modern Languages, thus composed, must needs be of so excellent an Original, being patcht up out of the Conceptions as well as Sounds of such barbarous or enslaved People. Whereas the *Latin* was framed or cultivated by the thoughts and 20 uses of the Noblest Nation that appears upon any Record of Story, and enriched only by the Spoils of *Greece*, which alone could pretend to contest it with them. 'Tis obvious enough what rapport there is, and must ever be, between the thoughts and words, the Conceptions and Languages 25 of every Country, and how great a difference this must make in the Comparison and Excellence of Books, and how easy and just a preference it must decree to those of the *Greek* and *Latin* before any of the modern Languages.

It may, perhaps, be further affirmed in Favour of the 30 Ancients, that the oldest Books we have are still in their kind the best. The two most ancient that I know of in Prose, among those we call prophane Authors, are *Æsop's* Fables and *Phalaris's* Epistles, both living near the same time, which was that of *Cyrus* and *Pythagoras*. As the 35

first has been agreed by all Ages since for the greatest Master in his kind, and all others of that sort have been but imitations of his Original, so I think the Epistles of *Phalaris* to have more Race, more Spirit, more Force of Wit and Genius, than any others I have ever seen, either ancient or modern. I know several Learned men (or that usually pass for such, under the Name of Criticks) have not esteemed them Genuine, and *Politian* with some others have attributed them to *Lucian*. But I think he must have little skill in Painting, that cannot find out this to be an Original; such diversity of Passions upon such variety of Actions and Passages of Life and Government, such Freedom of Thought, such Boldness of Expression, such Bounty to his Friends, such Scorn of his Enemies, such Honour of Learned men, such esteem of Good, such Knowledge of Life, such Contempt of Death, with such Fierceness of Nature and Cruelty of Revenge, could never be represented but by him that possessed them; and I esteem *Lucian* to have been no more Capable of Writing than of Acting what *Phalaris* did. In all one Writ you find the Scholar or the Sophist; and in all the other, the Tyrant and the Commander.

The next to these in Time are *Herodotus*, *Thucidides*, *Hippocrates*, *Plato*, *Xenophon*, and *Aristotle*, of whom I shall say no more than what I think is allowed by all, that they are in their several kinds inimitable. So are *Cæsar*, *Salust*, and *Cicero* in theirs, who are the Ancientest of the Latin (I speak still of Prose), unless it be some little of old *Cato* upon Rustick Affairs.

The Height and Purity of the *Roman* Style, as it began towards the Time of *Lucretius*, which was about that of the *Jugurthin* War, so it ended about that of *Tyberius*; and the last strain of it seems to have been *Velleius Paterculus*. The Purity of the *Greek* lasted a great deal longer, and must be allowed till *Trajan's* Time, when *Plutarch* wrote,

whose Greek is much more esteemable than the Latin of *Tacitus*, his Contemporary. After this last, I know none that deserves the Name of *Latin*, in comparison of what went before them, especially in the *Augustan Age*; If any, 'tis the little Treatise of *Minutius Fælix*. All Latin Books 5 that we have till the end of *Trajan*, and all Greek till the end of *Marcus Antoninus*, have a true and very esteemable Value. All written since that time seem to me to have little more than what comes from the Relation of Events we are glad to know, or the Controversy of Opinions in 10 Religion or Laws, wherein the busie World has been so much employed.

The great Wits among the moderns have been, in my Opinion, and in their several kinds, of the *Italians*, *Boccace*, *Machiavel*, and *Padre Paolo*; among the *Spaniards*, *Cer-* 15 *vantes*, that writ *Don Quixot*, and *Guevara*; among the *French*, *Rablais* and *Montagne*; among the *English*, Sir *Philip Sidney*, *Bacon*, and *Selden*. I mention nothing of what is written upon the Subject of Divinity, wherein the *Spanish* and *English* Pens have been most Conversant and 20 most Excelled. The Modern *French* are *Voiture*, *Roch-faucalt's* Memoirs, *Bussy's Amours de Gaul*, with several other little Relations or Memoirs that have run this Age, which are very pleasant and entertaining, and seem to have Refined the *French* Language to a degree that 25 cannot be well exceeded. I doubt it may have happened there, as it does in all Works, that the more they are filed and polished, the less they have of weight and of strength; and as that Language has much more fineness and smoothness at this time, so I take it to have had much 30 more force, spirit, and compass in *Montagne's* Age.

Since those accidents which contributed to the Restoration of Learning, almost extinguished in the *Western* Parts of *Europe*, have been observed, it will be just to mention some that may have hindred the advancement of 35

it, in proportion to what might have been expected from the mighty growth and progress made in the first Age after its recovery. One great reason may have been that very soon after the entry of Learning upon the Scene
5 of Christendom, another was made by many of the New-Learned men into the inquiries and contests about matters of Religion, the manners and maxims and institutions introduced by the Clergy for seven or eight Centuries past, The Authority of Scripture and Tradition,
10 Of Popes and of Councils, Of the ancient Fathers and of the later School-men and Casuists, Of Ecclesiastical and Civil Power. The humour of ravelling into all these mystical or entangled Matters, mingling with the Interests and Passions of Princes and of Parties, and thereby
15 heightened or inflamed, produced Infinite Disputes, raised violent Heats throughout all Parts of Christendom, and soon ended in many Defections or Reformations from the *Roman* Church, and in several new Institutions, both Ecclesiastical and Civil, in diverse Countries, which have
20 been since Rooted and Established in almost all the *North-West* Parts. The endless Disputes and litigious Quarrels upon all these Subjects, favoured and encouraged by the Interests of the several Princes engaged in them, either took up wholly or generally imployed the Thoughts, the
25 Studies, the Applications, the endeavours of all or most of the finest Wits, the deepest Scholars, and the most Learned Writers that the Age produced. Many excellent Spirits, and the most penetrating Genys, that might have made admirable Progresses and Advances in many other Sciences,
30 were sunk and overwhelmed in the abyss of Disputes about matters of Religion, without ever turning their Looks or Thoughts any other way. To these Disputes of the Pen succeeded those of the Sword; and the Ambition of great Princes and Ministers, mingled with the Zeal or
35 covered with the pretences of Religion, has for a Hundred

Years past infested Christendom with almost a perpetual Course or Succession either of Civil or of Foreign Wars: the noise and disorders thereof have been ever the most capital Enemies of the *Muses*, who are seated by the ancient Fables upon the top of *Parnassus*, that is, in a place of safety and of quiet from the reach of all noises and disturbances of the Regions below.

2 Another circumstance that may have hindred the advancement of Learning has been a want or decay of Favour in great Kings and Princes to encourage or 10 applaud it. Upon the first return or recovery of this fair Stranger among us, all were fond of seeing her, apt to applaud her: she was lodged in Palaces instead of Cells, and the greatest Kings and Princes of the Age took either a pleasure in courting her or a vanity in admiring her 15 and in favouring all her Train. The Courts of *Italy* and *Germany*, of *England*, of *France*, of *Popes* and of *Emperors* thought themselves Honoured and Adorned by the Number and Qualities of Learned men, and by all the improvements of Sciences and Arts wherein they excelled. They 20 were invited from all Parts, for the Use and Entertainment of Kings, for the Education and Instruction of Young Princes, for Advice and Assistance to the greatest Ministers; and in short, the Favour of Learning was the humour and mode of the Age. *Francis* the First, *Charles* 25 the Fifth, and *Henry* the Eighth, those three great Rivals, agreed in this, though in nothing else. Many Nobles pursued this Vein with great Application and Success, among whom *Picus de Mirandula*, a Sovereign Prince in *Italy*, might have proved a Prodigy of Learning, if 30 his Studies and Life had lasted as long as those of the Ancients: For I think all of them that writ much of what we have now remaining lived old, whereas he dyed about Three and Thirty, and left the World in admiration of so much knowledge in so much youth. Since those Reigns 35

I have not observed in our modern Story any Great Princes much Celebrated for their Favour of Learning, further than to serve their turns, to justify their Pretensions and Quarrels, or flatter their Successes. The
5 Honour of Princes has of late struck Sale to their Interest, whereas of old their Interests, Greatness, and Conquests were all Dedicated to their Glory and Fame.

How much the Studies and Labours of Learned men must have been damped for want of this influence and
10 kind aspect of Princes may be best conjectured from what happened on the contrary about the *Augustan* Age, when the Learning of *Rome* was at its height, and perhaps owed it in some Degree to the Bounty and Patronage of that Emperor, and *Mecænas*, his Favourite, as well as to the
15 Felicity of the Empire and Tranquility of the Age.

The humour of Avarice and greediness of Wealth have been ever and in all Countries where Silver and Gold have been in Price and of current use. But if it be true in particular Men, that as Riches encrease, the desires of them do
20 so too, May it not be true of the general Vein and Humour of Ages? May they not have turned more to this pursuit of insatiable gains, since the Discoveries and Plantations of the *West-Indies*, and those vast Treasures that have flowed in to these *Western* Parts of *Europe* almost every Year
25 and with such mighty Tides for so long a course of time? Where few are rich, few care for it; where many are so, many desire it; and most in time begin to think it necessary. Where this Opinion grows generally in a Countrey, the Temples of Honour are soon pulled down,
30 and all mens Sacrifices are made to those of Fortune: The Souldier as well as the Merchant, the Scholar as well as the Plough-man, the Divine and the States-man as well as the Lawyer and Physician.

Now I think that nothing is more evident in the World
35 than that Honour is a much stronger Principle, both of

Action and Invention, than gain can ever be. That all the Great and Noble Productions of Wit and of Courage have been inspired and exalted by that alone. That the Charming Flights and Labours of Poets, the deep Speculations and Studies of Philosophers, the Conquests of 5 Emperors and Atchievements of Heroes, have all flowed from this one Source of Honour and Fame. The last Farewel that *Horace* takes of his Lyrick Poems, *Epicurus* of his Inventions in Philosophy, *Augustus* of his Empire and Government, are all of the same strain; and as their 10 Lives were entertained, so their Age was relieved and their Deaths softned, by the Prospect of lying down upon the Bed of Fame.

Avarice is, on the other side, of all Passions the most sordid, the most clogged and covered with dirt and with 15 dross, so that it cannot raise its Wings beyond the smell of the Earth. 'Tis the Pay of common Soldiers, as Honour is of Commanders; and yet among those themselves none ever went so far upon the hopes of prey or of spoils as those that have been spirited by Honour or Religion. 20 'Tis no wonder, then, that Learning has been so little advanced since it grew to be mercenary, and the Progress of it has been fettered by the cares of the World, and disturbed by the Desires of being Rich or the fears of being Poor, from all which the ancient *Philosophers*, the 25 *Brachmans* of *India*, the *Chaldean Magi*, and *Ægyptian* Priests were disentangled and free.

But the last maim giving to Learning has been by the scorn of Pedantry, which the shallow, the superficial, and the sufficient among Scholars first drew upon themselves, 30 and very justly, by pretending to more than they had, or to more esteem than what they had could deserve, by broaching it in all places, at all times, upon all occasions, and by living so much among themselves, or in their Closets and Cells, as to make them unfit for all other business, and 35

ridiculous in all other Conversations. As an Infection that rises in a Town first falls upon Children or weak Constitutions or those that are subject to other Diseases, but, spreading further by degrees, seizes upon the most healthy, 5 vigorous, and strong, and when the Contagion grows very general, all the Neighbours avoid coming into the Town, or are afraid of those that are well among them as much as of those that are sick: Just so it fared in the Commonwealth of Learning; some poor weak Constitutions were first 10 infected with Pedantry, the Contagion spread in time upon some that were stronger; Foreigners that heard there was a Plague in the Countrey grew afraid to come there, and avoided the commerce of the Sound as well as of the Diseased. This dislike or apprehension turned, like all 15 fear, to hatred, and hatred to scorn. The rest of the Neighbours began first to rail at Pedants, then to ridicule them; the Learned began to fear the same Fate, and that the Pidgeons should be taken for Daws, because they were all in a Flock: And because the poorest and meanest of the 20 Company were proud, the best and the richest began to be ashamed.

An Ingenious *Spaniard* at *Brussels* would needs have it that the History of *Don Quixot* had ruined the *Spanish* Monarchy: For before that time Love and Valour were all 25 Romance among them; every young Cavalier that entred the Scene Dedicated the Services of his Life to his Honour first, and then to his Mistris. They Lived and Dyed in this Romantick Vein; and the old Duke of *Alva*, in his last *Portugal* expedition, had a young Mistress to whom 30 the Glory of that Atchievement was Devoted, by which he hoped to value himself, instead of those qualities he had lost with his youth. After *Don Quixot* appeared, and with that inimitable Wit and Humour turned all this Romantick Honour and Love into Ridicule, the *Spaniards*, he said, 35 began to grow ashamed of both, and to laugh at Fighting

and Loving, or at least otherwise than to pursue their Fortune or satisfy their Lust; and the consequences of this, both upon their Bodies and their Minds, this *Spaniard* would needs have pass for a great Cause of the Ruin of *Spain*, or of its Greatness and Power. 5

Whatever effect the Ridicule of Knight-Errantry might have had upon that Monarchy, I believe that of Pedantry has had a very ill one upon the Commonwealth of Learning; and I wish the Vein of Ridiculing all that is serious and good, all Honour and Virtue as well as Learning and Piety, may have no worse effects on any other State: 'Tis the Itch of our Age and Clymat, and has over run both the Court and the Stage, enters a House of Lords and Commons as boldly as a *Coffee-House*, Debates of Council as well as private Conversation; and I have known in my Life more than one or two Ministers of State that would rather have said a Witty thing than done a Wise one, and made the Company Laugh rather than the Kingdom Rejoyce. But this is enough to excuse the imperfections of Learning in our Age, and to censure the Sufficiency of some of the Learned; and this small Piece of Justice I have done the Ancients will not, I hope, be taken any more than 'tis meant, for any Injury to the Moderns. 15

I shall conclude with a Saying of *Alphonsus*, Sirnamed the Wise, King of *Aragon*, 25

That among so many things as are by Men possessed or pursued in the Course of their Lives, all the rest are Bawbles, Besides Old Wood to Burn, Old Wine to Drink, Old Friends to Converse with, and Old Books to Read.

See page 53, 54, 69, 70, 71, 73, 79.

II. *OF POETRY*

THE Two common Shrines, to which most Men offer up the Application of their Thoughts and their Lives, are Profit and Pleasure; and by their Devotions to either of these, they are vulgarly distinguished into Two Sects, and called either Busie or Idle Men. Whether these Terms differ in meaning or only in sound, I know very well may be disputed, and with appearance enough, since the Covetous Man takes perhaps as much Pleasure in his Gains as the Voluptuous does in his Luxury, and would not pursue his Business unless he were pleased with it, upon the last Account of what he most wishes and desires, nor would care for the encrease of his Fortunes unless he proposed thereby that of his Pleasures too, in one kind or other, so that Pleasure may be said to be his end, whether he will allow to find it in his pursuit or no. Much ado there has been, many Words spent, or (to speak with more respect to the antient Philosophers) many Disputes have been raised upon this Argument, I think to little purpose, and that all has been rather an Exercise of Wit than an Enquiry after Truth, and all Controversies that can never end had better perhaps never begin. The best is to take Words as they are most commonly spoken and meant, like Coyn as it most currantly passes, without raising scruples upon the weight or the allay, unless the cheat or the defect be gross and evident. Few Things in the World, or none, will bear too much refining; a Thred too fine Spun will easily break, and the Point of a Needle too finely Filed. The usual acceptation takes Profit and Pleasure for two different Things, and not only calls the Followers or Votaries of them by several Names of Busie and of Idle Men, but distinguishes the Faculties of the mind that are Conversant about them, calling the Opera-

tions of the first, Wisdom, and of the other, Wit, which is a *Saxon* Word that is used to express what the *Spaniards* and *Italians* call *Ingenio*, and the *French*, *Esprit*, both from the *Latin*; but I think Wit more peculiarly signifies that of *Poetry*, as may occur upon 5 Remarks of the *Runick* Language. To the first of these are Attributed the Inventions or Productions of things generally esteemed the most necessary, useful, or profitable to Human Life, either in private Possessions or publick Institutions; To the other, those Writings or 10 Discourses which are the most Pleasing or Entertaining to all that read or hear them: Yet, according to the Opinion of those that link them together, As the Inventions of Sages and Law-givers themselves do please as well as profit those who approve and follow them, so those of 15 Poets Instruct and Profit as well as Please such as are Conversant in them; and the happy mixture of both these makes the excellency in both those compositions, and has given occasion for esteeming or at least for calling Heroick Virtue and Poetry Divine. 20

The Names given to Poets, both in *Greek* and *Latin*, express the same Opinion of them in those Nations: The *Greek* signifying Makers or Creators, such as raise admirable Frames and Fabricks out of nothing, which strike with wonder and with pleasure the Eyes and Imaginations 25 of those who behold them; The *Latin* makes the same Word common to Poets and to Prophets. Now, as Creation is the first Attribute and highest Operation of Divine Power, so is Prophecy the greatest Emanation of Divine Spirit in the World. As the Names in those Two 30 Learned Languages, so the Causes of Poetry, are by the Writers of them made to be Divine, and to proceed from a Cœlestial Fire or Divine Inspiration; and by the vulgar Opinions, recited or related to in many Passages of those Authors, the Effects of Poetry were likewise thought Divine 35

and Supernatural, and Power of Charms and Enchantments were ascribed to it.

*Carmina vel Cælo possunt deducere Lunam,
Carminibus Circe Socios mutavit Ulyssis,
Frigidus in pratibus cantando rumpitur Anguis.*

But I can easily admire Poetry, and yet without adoring it: I can allow it to arise from the greatest Excellency of natural Temper or the greatest Race of Native Genius, without exceeding the reach of what is Human, or giving it any Approaches of Divinity, which is, I doubt, debased or dishonoured by ascribing to it any thing that is in the compass of our Action or even Comprehension, unless it be raised by an immediate influence from it self. I cannot allow Poetry to be more Divine in its effects than in its causes, nor any Operation produced by it to be more than purely natural, or to deserve any other sort of wonder than those of Musick or of Natural Magick, however any of them have appeared to minds little Versed in the Speculations of Nature, of occult Qualities, and the Force of Numbers or of Sounds. Whoever talks of drawing down the Moon from Heaven by force of Verses or of Charms, either believes not himself, or too easily believes what others told him, or perhaps follows an Opinion begun by the Practise of some Poet upon the facility of some People,—who, knowing the time when an Eclypse would happen, told them he would by his Charms call down the Moon at such an hour, and was by them thought to have performed it.

When I read that Charming Description in *Virgil's* Eighth Eclogue of all sorts of Charms and Fascinations by Verses, by Images, by Knots, by Numbers, by Fire, by Herbs, employed upon occasion of a violent Passion from a jealous or disappointed Love, I have recourse to the strong Impressions of Fables and of Poetry, to the easy mistakes of Popular Opinions, to the Force of Imagi-

nation, to the Secret Virtues of several Herbs, and to the Powers of Sounds: And I am sorry the Natural History or Account of Fascination has not imployed the Pen of some Person of such excellent Wit and deep Thought and Learning as *Casaubon*, who Writ. that curious and useful 5 Treatise of *Enthusiasm*, and by it discovered the hidden or mistaken Sources of that Delusion, so frequent in all Regions and Religions of the World, and which had so fatally spread over our Country in that Age in which this Treatise was so seasonably published. 'Tis much to be 10 lamented, That he lived not to compleat that Work in the Second Part he promised, or that his Friends neglected the publishing it, if it were left in Papers, though loose and unfinished. I think a clear Account of Enthusiasm and Fascination from their natural Causes would very 15 much deserve from Mankind in general as well as from the Common-wealth of Learning, might perhaps prevent many publick disorders, and save the Lives of many innocent deluded or deluding People, who suffer so frequently upon Account of Witches and Wizards. I 20 have seen many miserable Examples of this kind in my youth at home; and tho' the Humor or Fashion be a good deal worn out of the World within Thirty or Forty Years past, yet it still remains in several remote parts of *Germany*, *Sweden*, and some other Countries. 25

But to return to the Charms of Poetry, if the forsaken Lover in that Eclogue of *Virgil* had expected only from the Force of her Verses or her Charms, what is the Burthen of the Song, to bring *Daphnis* home from the Town where he was gone and engaged in a new Amour; 30 if she had pretended only to revive an old fainting Flame, or to damp a new one that was kindling in his Breast, she might, for ought I know, have compassed such Ends by the Power of such Charms, and without other than very Natural Enchantments. For there is no Question but 35

true Poetry may have the Force to raise Passions and to allay them, to change and to extinguish them, to temper Joy and Grief, to raise Love and Fear, nay, to turn Fear into Boldness, and Love into Indifference and into
5 Hatred it self; and I easily believe, That the disheartened *Spartans* were new animated, and recovered their lost Courage, by the Songs of *Tyrtæus*, that the Cruelty and Revenge of *Phalaris* were changed by the Odes of *Stesichorus* into the greatest Kindness and Esteem, and
10 that many men were as passionately Enamoured by the Charms of *Sappho's* Wit and Poetry as by those of Beauty in *Flora* or *Thais*; for 'tis not only Beauty gives Love, but Love gives Beauty to the Object that raises it; and if the possession be strong enough, let it come from what it will,
15 there is always Beauty enough in the Person that gives it. Nor is it any great Wonder that such Force should be found in Poetry, since in it are assembled all the Powers of Eloquence, of Musick, and of Picture, which are all allowed to make so strong Impressions upon Humane Minds. How
20 far Men have been affected with all or any of these needs little Proof or Testimony. The Examples have been known enough in *Greece* and *Italy*, where some have fallen down right in Love with the Ravishing Beauties of a lovely Object drawn by the Skill of an admirable Painter; nay,
25 Painters themselves have fallen in Love with some of their own Productions, and doated on them as on a Mistress or a fond Child, which distinguishes among the *Italians* the several Pieces that are done by the same Hand into several Degrees of those made *Con Studio*, *Con Diligenza*,
30 or *Con Amore*, whereof the last are ever the most excelling. But there needs no more Instances of this Kind than the Stories related and believed by the best Authors as known and undisputed; Of the two young *Græcians*, one whereof ventured his Life to be lock'd up all Night in the Temple,
35 and satisfie his Passion with the Embraces and Enjoyment

of a Statue of *Venus*, that was there set up and designed for another sort of Adoration; The other pined away and dyed for being hindred his perpetually gazing, admiring, and embracing a Statue at *Athens*.

The Powers of Musick are either felt and known by all 5 Men, and are allowed to work strangely upon the Mind and the Body, the Passions and the Blood, to raise Joy and Grief, to give Pleasure and Pain, to cure Diseases and the Mortal Sting of the *Tarantula*, to give Motions to the Feet as well as the Heart, to Compose disturbed Thoughts, 10 to assist and heighten Devotion it self. We need no Recourse to the Fables of *Orpheus* or *Amphion*, or the Force of their Musick upon Fishes and Beasts; 'tis enough that we find the Charming of Serpents, and the Cure or Allay of an evil Spirit or Possession, attributed to 15 it in Sacred Writ.

For the Force of Eloquence that so often raised and appeased the Violence of Popular Commotions and caused such Convulsions in the *Athenian* State, no Man need more to make him Acknowledge it than to consider *Cæsar*, 20 one of the greatest and wisest of mortal Men, come upon the Tribunal full of Hatred and Revenge, and with a determined Resolution to Condemn *Labienu*s, yet upon the Force of *Cicero*'s Eloquence, in an Oration for his Defence, begin to change Countenance, turn pale, shake to that 25 degree that the Papers he held fell out of his hand, as it he had been frighted with Words that never was so with Blows, and at last change all his Anger into Clemency, and acquit the brave Criminal instead of condemning him. 30

Now if the Strength of these three mighty Powers be united in Poetry, we need not Wonder that such Virtues and such Honours have been attributed to it, that it has been thought to be inspired, or has been called Divine; and yet I think it will not be disputed that the Force of 35

Wit and of Reasoning, the Height of Conceptions and Expressions, may be found in Poetry as well as in Oratory, the Life and Spirit of Representation or Picture as much as in Painting, and the Force of Sounds as well as in
5 Musick ; and how far these three natural Powers together may extend, and to what Effect, even such as may be mistaken for Supernatural or Magical, I leave it to such Men to consider whose Thoughts turn to such Speculations as these, or who by their native Temper and
10 Genius are in some degree disposed to receive the Impressions of them. For my part, I do not wonder that the famous Doctor *Harvey*, when he was reading *Virgil*, should sometimes throw him down upon the Table, and say he had a Devil, nor that the learned *Meric Casaubon*
15 should find such Charming Pleasures and Emotions as he describes, upon the reading some Parts of *Lucretius* ; that so many should cry, and with down-right Tears, at some Tragedies of *Shake-spear*, and so many more should feel such Turns or Curdling of their Blood upon the reading
20 or hearing some excellent Pieces of Poetry, nor that *Octavia* fell into a Swound at the recital made by *Virgil* of those Verses in the Sixth of his *Æneides*.

This is enough to assert the Powers of Poetry, and discover the Ground of those Opinions of old which
25 derived it from Divine Inspiration, and gave it so great a share in the supposed Effects of Sorcery or Magick. But as the Old Romances seem to lessen the Honour of true Prowess and Valour in their Knights by giving such a part in all their Chief Adventures to Enchantment, so the
30 true excellency and just esteem of Poetry seems rather debased than exalted by the Stories or Belief of the Charms performed by it, which among the *Northern* Nations grew so strong and so general that about Five or Six Hundred Years ago all the *Runick* Poetry came to be
35 decry'd, and those ancient Characters in which they were

Written to be abolished by the Zeal of Bishops and even by Orders and Decrees of State, which has given a great Maim, or rather an irrecoverable Loss, to the Story of those *Northern* Kingdoms, the Seat of our Ancestors in all the *Western* parts of *Europe*. 5

The more true and natural Source of Poetry may be discovered by observing to what God this Inspiration was ascribed by the Antients, which was *Apollo*, or the Sun, esteemed among them the God of Learning in general, but more particularly of Musick and of Poetry. The 10
Mystery of this Fable means, I suppose, that a certain Noble and Vital Heat of Temper, but especially of the Brain, is the true Spring of these Two Arts or Sciences. This was that Cœlestial Fire which gave such a pleasing Motion and Agitation to the minds of those Men that have 15
been so much admired in the World, that raises such infinite images of things so agreeable and delightful to Mankind. By the influence of this Sun are produced those Golden and Inexhausted Mines of Invention, which has furnished the World with Treasures so highly 20
esteemed and so universally known and used in all the Regions that have yet been discovered. From this arises that Elevation of Genius which can never be produced by any Art or study, by Pains or by Industry, which cannot be taught by Precepts or Examples, and therefore is 25
agreed by all to be the pure and free Gift of Heaven or of Nature, and to be a Fire kindled out of some hidden spark of the very first Conception.

But tho' Invention be the Mother of Poetry, yet this Child is like all others born naked, and must be Nourished 30
with Care, Cloathed with Exactness and Elegance, Educated with Industry, Instructed with Art, Improved by Application, Corrected with Severity, and Accomplished with Labour and with Time, before it Arrives at any great Perfection or Growth. 'Tis certain that no Composition 35

requires so many several Ingredients, or of more different sorts than this, nor that to excel in any qualities there are necessary so many Gifts of Nature and so many improvements of Learning and of Art. For there must
5 be an universal Genius, of great Compass as well as great Elevation. There must be a spritely Imagination or Fancy, fertile in a thousand Productions, ranging over infinite Ground, piercing into every Corner, and by the Light of that true Poetical Fire discovering a thousand
10 little Bodies or Images in the World, and Similitudes among them, unseen to common Eyes, and which could not be discovered without the Rays of that Sun.

Besides the heat of Invention and liveliness of Wit, there must be the coldness of good Sense and soundness
15 of Judgment, to distinguish between things and conceptions which at first sight or upon short glances seem alike, to choose among infinite productions of Wit and Fancy which are worth preserving and cultivating, and which are better stifled in the Birth, or thrown away when
20 they are born, as not worth bringing up. Without the Forces of Wit all Poetry is flat and languishing; without the succors of Judgment 'tis wild and extravagant. The true wonder of Poesy is, That such contraries must meet to compose it: a Genius both Penetrating and Solid; in
25 Expression both Delicacy and Force; and the Frame or Fabrick of a true Poem must have something both Sublime and Just, Amazing and Agreeable. There must be a great Agitation of Mind to Invent, a great Calm to Judge and correct; there must be upon the same Tree, and at the
30 same Time, both Flower and Fruit. To work up this Metal into exquisite Figure, there must be imploy'd the Fire, the Hammer, the Chisel, and the File. There must be a General Knowledge both of Nature and of Arts; and to go the lowest that can be, there are required *Genius*,
35 Judgment, and Application; for without this last all the

rest will not serve turn, and none ever was a great Poet that applied himself much to any thing else.

When I speak of Poetry, I mean not an Ode or an Elegy, a Song or a Satyr, nor by a Poet the Composer of any of these, but of a just Poem; And after all I have 5 said, 'tis no wonder there should be so few that appeared in any Parts or any Ages of the World, or that such as have should be so much admired, and have almost Divinity ascribed to them and to their Works.

Whatever has been among those who are mentioned 10 with so much Praise or Admiration by the Antients, but are lost to us, and unknown any further than their Names, I think no Man has been so bold among those that remain to question the Title of *Homer* and *Virgil*, not only to the first Rank, but to the supream Dominion in this State, and 15 from whom, as the great Law-givers as well as Princes, all the Laws and Orders of it are or may be derived. *Homer* was without Dispute the most Universal *Genius* that has been known in the World, and *Virgil* the most accomplish't. To the first must be allowed the most fertile Invention, the 20 richest Vein, the most general Knowledge, and the most lively Expression: To the last, The noblest Idea's, the justest Institution, the wisest Conduct, and the choicest Elocution. To speak in the Painters Terms, we find in the Works of *Homer* the most Spirit, Force, and Life; in 25 those of *Virgil*, the best Design, the truest Proportions, and the greatest Grace: The Colouring in both seems equal, and, indeed, in both is admirable. *Homer* had more Fire and Rapture, *Virgil* more Light and Swiftmess; or at least the Poetical Fire was more raging in one, but clearer 30 in the other, which makes the first more amazing and the latter more agreeable. The Oare was richer in one, but in t'other more refined, and better allay'd to make up excellent Work. Upon the whole, I think it must be confessed that *Homer* was of the two, and perhaps of all 35

others, the vastest, the sublimest, and the most wonderful *Genius* ; and that he has been generally so esteemed, there cannot be a greater Testimony given than what has been by some observed, that not only the Greatest Masters have
5 found in his Works the best and truest Principles of all their Sciences or Arts, but that the noblest Nations have derived from them the Original of their several Races, though it be hardly yet agreed, Whether his Story be True or Fiction. In short, these two immortal Poets must be
10 allowed to have so much excelled in their kinds as to have exceeded all Comparison, to have even extinguished Emulation, and in a Manner confined true Poetry not only to their two Languages, but to their very Persons. And I am apt to believe so much of the true *Genius* of Poetry in
15 general, and of its Elevation in these two Particulars, that I know not whether of all the Numbers of Mankind that live within the Compass of a Thousand Years, for one Man that is born capable of making such a Poet as *Homer* or *Virgil*, there may not be a Thousand born Capable of
20 making as great Generals of Armies or Ministers of State as any the most Renowned in Story.

I do not here intend to make a further Critick upon Poetry, which were too great a Labour, nor to give Rules for it, which were as great a Presumption. Besides, there
25 has been so much Paper blotted upon these Subjects in this Curious and Censuring Age, that 'tis all grown tedious or Repetition. The Modern *French* Wits (or Pretenders) have been very severe in their Censures and exact in their Rules, I think to very little Purpose ; For I know not why they
30 might not have contented themselves with those given by *Aristotle* and *Horace*, and have Translated them rather than Commented upon them, for all they have done has been no more, so as they seem, by their Writings of this kind, rather to have valued themselves than improved any body else.
35 The Truth is, there is something in the *Genius* of Poetry too

Libertine to be confined to so many Rules; and whoever goes about to subject it to such Constraints loses both its Spirit and Grace, which are ever Native, and never learnt, even of the best Masters. 'Tis as if, to make excellent Honey, you should cut off the Wings of your Bees, confine 5 them to their Hive or their Stands, and lay Flowers before them, such as you think the sweetest and like to yield the finest Extraction; you had as good pull out their Stings, and make arrant Drones of them. They must range through Fields as well as Gardens, choose such Flowers as 10 they please, and by Proprieties and Scents they only know and distinguish. They must work up their Cells with Admirable Art, extract their Honey with infinite Labour, and sever it from the Wax with such Distinction and Choyce as belongs to none but themselves to perform or 15 to judge.

It would be too much Mortification to these great Arbitrary Rulers among the *French* Writers or our own to Observe the worthy Productions that have been formed by their Rules, the Honour they have received in the 20 World, or the Pleasure they have given Mankind. But to comfort them, I do not know there was any great Poet in *Greece* after the Rules of that Art layd down by *Aristotle*, nor in *Rome* after those by *Horace*, which yet none of our Moderns pretend to have out-done. Perhaps *Theocritus* 25 and *Lucan* may be alledg'd against this Assertion; but the first offered no further than at Idils or Eclogues; and the last, though he must beavowed for a true and a happy *Genius*, and to have made some very high Flights, yet he is so unequal to himself, and his Muse is so young, that his Faults 30 are too noted to allow his Pretences. *Fæliciter audet* is the true Character of *Lucan*, as of *Ovid*, *Lusit amabiliter*. After all, the utmost that can be atchieved or, I think, pretended by any Rules in this Art is but to hinder some men from being very ill Poets, but not to make any man 35

a very good one. To judge who is so, we need go no further for Instruction than three Lines of *Horace* :

*Ille meum qui Pectus inaniter angit,
Irritat, mulcet, falsis terroribus implet,
5 Ut Magus, & modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis.*

He is a Poet,

*Who vainly anguishes my Breast,
Provokes, allays, and with false Terror fills,
Like a Magician, and now sets me down
10 In Thebes, and now in Athens.*

Whoever does not affect and move the same present Passions in you that he represents in others, and at other times raise Images about you, as a Conjuror is said to do Spirits, Transport you to the Places and to the Persons he
15 describes, cannot be judged to be a Poet, though his Measures are never so just, his Feet never so smooth, or his Sounds never so sweet.

But instead of Critick or Rules concerning Poetry, I shall rather turn my Thoughts to the History of it, and
20 observe the Antiquity, the Uses, the Changes, the Decays, that have attended this great Empire of Wit.

It is, I think, generally agreed to have been the first sort of Writing that has been used in the World, and in several Nations to have preceded the very Invention or
25 Usage of Letters. This last is certain in *America*, where the first *Spaniards* met with many strains of Poetry, and left several of them Translated into their Language, which seem to have flowed from a true Poetick Vein before any Letters were known in those Regions. The same is
30 probable of the *Scythians*, the *Grecians*, and the *Germans*. *Aristotle* says the *Agathyrsi* had their Laws all in Verse ; and *Tacitus*, that the *Germans* had no Annals nor Records but what were so ; and for the *Grecian* Oracles delivered in them, we have no certain Account when they began, but
35 rather reason to believe it was before the Introduction of

Letters from *Phœnicia* among them. *Pliny* tells it, as a thing known, that *Pherecides* was the first who Writ Prose in the *Greek* Tongue, and that he lived about the time of *Cyrus*, whereas *Homer* and *Hesiod* lived some Hundreds of Years before that Age, and *Orpheus*, *Linus*, *Musæus*, some Hun- 5
dreds before them : And of the *Sybils*, several were before any of those, and in times as well as places whereof we have no clear Records now remaining. What *Solon* and *Pythagoras* Writ is said to have been in Verse, who were something older than *Cyrus* ; and before them were *Archi- 10*
locus, *Simonides*, *Tyrtæus*, *Sappho*, *Stesichorus*, and several other Poets famous in their times. The same thing is reported of *Chaldæa*, *Syria*, and *China* ; among the ancient *Western Goths*, our Ancestors, the *Runick* Poetry seems to have been as old as their Letters ; and their Laws, 15
their Precepts of Wisdom as well as their Records, their Religious Rites as well as their Charms and Incantations, to have been all in Verse.

Among the *Hebrews*, and even in Sacred Writ, the most antient is by some Learned Men esteemed to be the Book 20
of *Job*, and that it was Written before the time of *Moses*, and that it was a Translation into *Hebrew*, out of the old *Chaldæan* or *Arabian* Language. It may probably be conjectured that he was not a *Jew*, from the place of his abode, which appears to have been Seated between 25
the *Chaldæans* of one Side and the *Sabæans* (who were of *Arabia*) on the other ; and by many Passages of that admirable and truly inspired Poem, the Author seems to have lived in some Parts near the Mouth of *Euphrates*, or the *Persian* Gulf, where he contemplated the Wonders 30
of the Deep as well as the other Works of Nature common to those Regions. Nor is it easy to find any Traces of the *Mosaical* Rites or Institutions, either in the Divine Worship or the Morals related to in those Writings : For not only Sacrifices and Praises were much more antient in Religious 35

Service than the Age of *Moses*; But the Opinion of one Deity, and Adored without any Idol or Representation, was Professed and Received among the antient *Persians* and *Hetruscans* and *Chaldeans*. So that if *Job* was an
5 *Hebrew*, 'tis probable he may have been of the Race of *Heber*, who lived in *Chaldæa*, or of *Abraham*, who is supposed to have left that Country for the Profession or Worship of one God, rather than from the Branch of *Isaac* and *Israel*, who lived in the Land of *Canaan*. Now I
10 think it is out of Controversy that the Book of *Job* was Written Originally in Verse, and was a Poem upon the Subject of the Justice and Power of God, and in Vindication of his Providence against the common Arguments of Atheistical Men, who took occasion to dispute it from the
15 usual Events of Human things, by which so many ill and impious Men seem Happy and Prosperous in the course of their Lives, and so many Pious and Just Men seem Miserable or Afflicted. The *Spanish* Translation of the *Jews* in *Ferrara*, which pretends to render the *Hebrew*, as near as could be,
20 word for word, and for which all Translators of the Bible since have had great Regard, gives us the Two first Chapters and the Last from the seventh Verse in Prose, as an Historical Introduction and Conclusion of the Work, and all the rest in Verse, except the Transitions from one
25 Part or Person of this Sacred Dialogue to another.

But if we take the Books of *Moses* to be the most antient in the *Hebrew* Tongue, yet the Song of *Moses* may probably have been Written before the rest; as that of *Deborah*, before the Book of *Judges*, being Praises sung to God upon
30 the Victories or Successes of the *Israelites*, related in both. And I never read the last without observing in it as True and Noble Strains of Poetry and Picture as in any other Language whatsoever, in spite of all Disadvantages from Translations into so different Tongues and common
35 Prose. If an Opinion of some Learned Men, both Modern

and Antient, could be allowed, that *Esdras* was the Writer or Compiler of the first Historical Parts of the Old Testament, though from the same Divine Inspiration as that of *Moses* and the other Prophets, then the Psalms of *David* would be the first Writings we find in *Hebrew*; and next 5 to them, the Song of *Solomon*, which was written when he was young, and *Ecclesiastes* when he was old. So that from all sides, both Sacred and Prophane, It appears that *Poetry* was the first sort of Writing known and used in the several Nations of the World. 10

It may seem strange, I confess, upon the first thought, that a sort of Style so regular and so difficult should have grown in use before the other so easy and so loose: But if we consider what the first end of Writing was, it will appear probable from Reason as well as Experience; For 15 the true and General End was but the Help of Memory in preserving that of Words and of Actions, which would otherwise have been lost and soon vanish away with the Transitory Passage of Human Breath and Life. Before the Discourses and Disputes of Philosophers began to 20 busie or amuse the *Græcian* Wits, there was nothing Written in Prose, but either Laws, some short Sayings of Wise men, or some Riddles, Parables, or Fables, wherein were couched by the Antients many Strains of Natural or Moral Wisdom and Knowledge, and besides these some 25 short Memorials of Persons, Actions, and of Times. Now 'tis obvious enough to conceive how much easier all such Writings should be Learnt and Remembred in Verse than in Prose, not only by the Pleasure of Measures and of Sounds, which gives a great Impression to Memory, but by 30 the order of Feet, which makes a great Facility of Tracing one Word after another, by knowing what sort of Foot or Quantity must necessarily have preceded or followed the Words we retain and desire to make up.

This made Poetry so necessary before Letters were 35

invented, and so convenient afterwards ; and shews that the great Honor and general Request wherein it has always been has not proceeded only from the Pleasure and Delight, but likewise from the Usefulness and Profit of
 5 Poetical Writings.

This leads me naturally to the Subjects of Poetry, which have been generally Praise, Instruction, Story, Love, Grief, and Reproach. Praise was the Subject of all the Songs and Psalms mentioned in Holy Writ, of the Hymns
 10 of *Orpheus*, of *Homer*, and many others ; Of the *Carmina Secularia* in *Rome*, Composed all and Designed for the Honor of their Gods ; Of *Pindar*, *Stesichorus*, and *Tyrtæus*, in the Praises of Virtue or Virtuous Men. The Subject of *Job* is Instruction concerning the Attributes of
 15 God and the Works of Nature. Those of *Simonides*, *Phocillides*, *Theognis*, and several other of the smaller Greek Poets, with what passes for *Pythagoras*, are Instructions in Morality ; The first Book of *Hesiod* and *Virgils Georgicks*, in Agriculture, and *Lucretius* in the
 20 deepest natural Philosophy. Story is the proper Subject of *Heroick* Poems, as *Homer* and *Virgil* in their inimitable *Iliads* and *Æneids* ; And *Fable*, which is a sort of Story, in the *Metamorphosis* of *Ovid*. The *Lyrick* Poetry has been chiefly Conversant about Love, tho' turned often
 25 upon Praise too ; and the Vein of Pastorals and Eclogues has run the same course, as may be observed in *Theocrytus*, *Virgil*, and *Horace*, who was, I think, the first and last of true *Lyrick* Poets among the *Latins*. Grief has been always the Subject of *Elegy*, and Reproach that of *Satyr*.
 30 The *Dramatick* Poesy has been Composed of all these, but the chief end seems to have been Instruction, and under the disguise of Fables or the Pleasure of Story to shew the Beauties and the Rewards of Virtue, the Deformities and Misfortunes or Punishment of Vice ; By Examples of
 35 both, to Encourage one, and Deter Men from the other ; to

Reform ill Customs, Correct ill Manners, and Moderate all violent Passions. These are the general Subjects of both Parts, tho' Comedy give us but the Images of common Life, and Tragedy those of the greater and more extraordinary Passions and Actions among Men. To go further upon 5 this Subject would be to tread so beaten Paths, that to Travel in them only raises Dust, and is neither of Pleasure nor of Use.

For the Changes that have happened in Poetry, I shall observe one Ancient, and the others that are Modern will 10 be too Remarkable, in the Declines or Decays of this great Empire of Wit. The first Change of Poetry was made by Translating it into Prose, or Cloathing it in those loose Robes or common Veils that disguised or covered the true Beauty of its Features and Exactness of its Shape. 15 This was done first by *Æsop* in *Greek*, but the Vein was much more antient in the *Eastern* Regions, and much in Vogue, as we may observe in the many Parables used in the old Testament as well as in the New. And there is a Book of Fables, of the Sort of *Æsop's*, Translated out of 20 *Persian*, and pretended to have been so into that Language out of the antient *Indian*; But though it seems Genuine of the *Eastern* Countries, yet I do not take it to be so old nor to have so much Spirit as the *Greek*. The next Succession of Poetry in Prose seems to have been in the 25 *Miletian* Tales, which were a sort of little Pastoral Romances; and though much in request in old *Greece* and *Rome*, yet we have no Examples that I know of them, unless it be the *Longi Pastoralia*, which gives a Tast of the great Delicacy and Pleasure that was found so generally 30 in those sort of Tales. The last Kind of Poetry in Prose is that which in latter Ages has over-run the World under the Name of Romances, which tho' it seems Modern and a Production of the *Gothick* Genius, yet the Writing is antient. The Remainders of *Petronius Arbiter* seem to 35

be of this Kind, and that which *Lucian* calls his True History. But the most antient that passes by the Name is *Heliodorus*, Famous for the Author's chusing to lose his Bishoprick rather than disown that Child of his Wit.
5 The true Spirit or Vein of antient Poetry in this Kind seems to shine most in Sir *Philip Sidney*, whom I esteem both the greatest Poet and the Noblest Genius of any that have left Writings behind them and published in ours or any other modern Language,—a Person born capable not
10 only of forming the greatest *Ideas*, but of leaving the noblest Examples, if the length of his Life had been equal to the excellence of his Wit and his Virtues.

With him I leave the Discourse of antient Poetry, and to discover the Decays of this Empire must turn to that
15 of the modern, which was introduced after the Decays or rather Extinction of the old, as if, true Poetry being dead, an Apparition of it walked about. This mighty Change arrived by no smaller Occasions nor more ignoble Revolutions than those which destroyed the antient Em-
20 pire and Government of *Rome*, and Erected so many New ones upon their Ruins, by the Invasions and Conquests or the general Inundations of the *Goths*, *Vandals*, and other Barbarous or Northern Nations, upon those Parts of *Europe* that had been subject to the *Romans*. After
25 the Conquests made by *Cæsar* upon *Gaul* and the nearer Parts of *Germany*, which were continued and enlarged in the times of *Augustus* and *Tiberius* by their Lieutenants or Generals, great Numbers of *Germans* and *Gauls* resorted to the *Roman Armies*, and to the City it self, and habituated
30 themselves there, as many *Spaniards*, *Syrians*, *Græcians* had done before upon the Conquest of those Countries. This mixture soon Corrupted the Purity of the *Latin* Tongue, so that in *Lucan*, but more in *Seneca*, we find a great and harsh Allay entered into the Style of the
35 *Augustan Age*. After *Trajan* and *Adrian* had subdued

many *German* and *Scythian* Nations on both sides of the *Danube*, the Commerce of those barbarous People grew very frequent with the *Romans*; and I am apt to think that the little Verses ascribed to *Adrian* were in Imitation of the *Runick* Poetry. The *Scythicas Pati Pruinas* of *Florus* shews their Race or Clymate, and the first Rhyme that ever I read in *Latin*, with little Allusions of Letters or Syllables, is in that of *Adrian* at his Death :

*O Animula vagula, blandula,
Quæ nunc abibis in loca?
Pallidula, lurida, timidula,
Nec, ut soles, dabis joca.*

10

'Tis probable, the old Spirit of Poetry being lost or frightened away by those long and bloody Wars with such barbarous Enemies, this New Ghost began to appear in its room even about that Age, or else that *Adrian*, who affected that piece of Learning as well as others, and was not able to reach the old Vein, turned to a new one, which his Expeditions into those Countries made more allowable in an Emperor, and his Example recommended to others. In the time of *Boetius*, who lived under *Theodorick* in *Rome*, we find the *Latin* Poetry smell rank of this *Gothick* Imitation, and the old vein quite seared up. 15

After that Age Learning grew every day more and more obscured by that Cloud of Ignorance which, coming from the *North* and increasing with the Numbers and Successes of those barbarous People, at length overshadowed all *Europe* for so long together. The *Roman* Tongue began it self to fail or be disused, and by its Corruption made way for the Generation of three New Languages, in *Spain*, *Italy*, and *France*. The Courts of the Princes and Nobles, who were of the Conquering Nations, for several Ages used their *Gothick*, or *Franc*, or *Saxon* Tongues, which were mingled with those of *Germany*, where some of the *Goths* had sojourned long, 25 30 35

before they proceeded to their Conquests of the more *Southern* or *Western* Parts. Whereever the *Roman* Colonies had long remained and their Language had been generally spoken, the common People used that still, but
5 vitiated with the base allay of their Provincial Speech. This in *Charlemain's* time was called in *France*, *Rustica Romana*, and in *Spain*, during the *Gothick* Reigns there, *Romance*; but in *England*, from whence all the *Roman* Souldiers, and great Numbers of the *Britains* most accus-
10 tomed to their Commerce and Language, had been drained for the Defence of *Gaul* against the barbarous Nations that invaded it about the time of *Valentinian*, that Tongue (being wholly extinguish't, as well as their own) made way for the intire use of the *Saxon* Language. With these
15 Changes the antient Poetry was wholly lost in all these Countries, and a new sort grew up by degrees, which was called by a new Name of Rhimes, with an easy Change of the *Gothick* Word *Runes*, and not from the *Greek* *Rythmes*, as is vulgarly supposed.
20 *Runes* was properly the Name of the Antient *Gothick* Letters or Characters, which were Invented first or introduced by *Odin*, in the Colony or Kingdom of the *Getes* or *Goths*, which he Planted in the *North-West* Parts and round the *Baltick* Sea, as has been before related. But
25 because all the Writings they had among them for many Ages were in Verse, it came to be the common Name of all sorts of Poetry among the *Goths*, and the Writers or Composers of them were called *Runers*, or *Rymers*. They had likewise another Name for them, or for some
30 sorts of them, which was *Vüses*, or *Wises*; and because the Sages of that Nation expressed the best of their Thoughts, and what Learning and Prudence they had, in these kind of Writings, they that succeeded best and with most Applause were termed Wise-men, the good
35 Sense or Learning or useful Knowledge contained in

them was called Wisdom, and the pleasant or facetious Vein among them was called Wit, which was applied to all Spirit or Race of Poetry, where it was found in any Men, and was generally pleasing to those that heard or read them.

Of these *Runes* there were in use among the *Goths* above a hundred several sorts, some Composed in longer, some in shorter Lines, some equal and others unequal, with many different Cadencies, Quantities, or Feet, which in the pronouncing make many different sorts of Original or Natural Tunes. Some were Framed with Allusions of Words or Consonance of Syllables or of Letters, either in the same Line, or in the Dystick, or by alternate Succession and Resemblance, which made a sort of Gingle that pleased the ruder Ears of that People. And because their Language was composed most of Monosyllables and of so great Numbers, many must end in the same Sound; another Sort of *Runes* were made with the Care and Study of ending two Lines, or each other of four Lines, with Words of the same sound, which being the easiest, requiring less Art and needing less Spirit, because a certain Chime in the Sounds supplied that want and pleased common Ears, this in time grew the most general among all the *Gothick* Colonies in *Europe*, and made Rhymes or *Runes* pass for the modern Poetry in these Parts of the World.

This was not used only in their modern Languages, but, during those ignorant Ages, even in that barbarous *Latin* which remained, and was preserved among the *Monks* and *Priests*, to distinguish them by some shew of Learning from the Laity, who might well admire it, in what Degree soever, and Reverence the Professors, when they themselves could neither write nor read, even in their own Language; I mean not only the vulgar Laymen, but even the Generality of Nobles, Barons, and

Princes among them; and this lasted till the antient Learning and Languages began to be restored in *Europe* about Two Hundred Years ago.

The common vein of the *Gothick Runes* was what is
5 Termed *Dithyrambick*, and was of a raving or rambling
sort of Wit or Invention, loose and flowing, with little
Art or Confinement to any certain Measures or Rules;
yet some of it wanted not the true Spirit of Poetry in some
Degree, or that natural Inspiration which has been said
10 to arise from some Spark of Poetical Fire wherewith particular Men are born. And such as it was, it served the
turn, not only to please, but even to charm the Ignorant
and Barbarous Vulgar, where it was in use. This made
the *Runers* among the *Goths* as much in request and
15 admired as any of the antient and most celebrated Poets
were among the Learned Nations; for among the blind,
he that has one Eye is a Prince. They were as well as
the others thought inspired, and the Charms of their *Runick*
Conceptions were generally esteemed Divine, or Magical
20 at least.

The subjects of them were various, but commonly the
same with those already observed in the true antient
Poetry. Yet this Vein was chiefly employed upon the
Records of Bold and Martial Actions, and the Praises
25 of Valiant Men that had Fought Successfully or Dyed
Bravely; and these Songs or Ballads were usually sung
at Feasts, or in Circles of Young or Idle Persons, and
served to inflame the Humour of War, of Slaughter, and
of Spoils among them. More refined Honour or Love
30 had little part in the Writings, because it had little in the
Lives or Actions of those fierce People and bloody Times.
Honour among them consisted in Victory, and Love in
Rapes and in Lust.

But as the true Flame of Poetry was rare among them,
35 and the rest was but Wild Fire that Sparkled or rather

Crackled a while, and soon went out with little Pleasure or Gazing of the Beholders, Those *Runers* who could not raise Admiration by the Spirit of their Poetry endeavoured to do it by another, which was that of Enchantments : This came in to supply the Defect of that sublime and 5 Marvellous, which has been found both in Poetry and Prose among the Learned Antients. The *Gothick Runers*, to Gain and Establish the Credit and Admiration of their Rhymes, turned the use of them very much to Incantations and Charms, pretending by them to raise Storms, to Calm 10 the Seas, to cause Terror in their Enemies, to Transport themselves in the Air, to Conjure Spirits, to Cure Diseases, and Stanch Bleeding Wounds, to make Women kind or easy, and Men hard or invulnerable, as one of their most antient *Runers* affirms of himself and his own Atchiev- 15 ments, by Force of these Magical Arms. The Men or Women who were thought to perform such Wonders or Enchantments were, from *Vüses*, or *Wises*, the Name of those Verses wherein their Charms were conceived, called *Wizards* or *Witches*. 20

Out of this Quarry seem to have been raised all those Trophies of Enchantment that appear in the whole Fabrick of the old *Spanish* Romances, which were the Productions of the *Gothick* Wit among them during their Reign ; and after the Conquests of *Spain* by the *Saracens*, they were 25 applied to the long Wars between them and the Christians. From the same perhaps may be derived all the visionary Tribe of *Faries*, *Elves*, and *Goblins*, of *Sprites* and of *Bul-beggars*, that serve not only to fright Children into whatever their Nurses please, but sometimes, by lasting 30 Impressions, to disquiet the sleeps and the very Lives of Men and Women, till they grow to Years of Discretion ; and that, God knows, is a Period of time which some People Arrive to but very late, and perhaps others never. At least, this belief prevailed so far among the *Goths* and 35

their Races, that all sorts of Charms were not only Attributed to their *Runes* or *Verses*, but to their very Characters ; so that, about the Eleventh Century, they were forbidden and abolished in *Sweden*, as they had
5 been before in *Spain*, by Civil and Ecclesiastical Commands or Constitutions ; and what has been since recovered of that Learning or Language has been fetcht as far as *Ysland* it self.

How much of this Kind and of this Credulity remained
10 even to our own Age may be observed by any Man that Reflects, so far as Thirty or Forty Years, how often Avouched, and how generally Credited, were the Stories of *Fairies*, *Sprites*, *Witchcrafts*, and *Enchantment*s. In some Parts of *France*, and not longer ago, the common People believed
15 certainly there were *Lougaroos*, or Men turned into Wolves ; and I remember several *Irish* of the same mind. The Remainders are woven into our very Language : *Mara*, in old *Runick*, was a *Goblin* that seized upon Men asleep in their Beds, and took from them all Speech and
20 Motion ; Old *Nicka* was a *Sprite* that came to strangle People who fell into the Water ; *Bo* was a fierce *Gothick* Captain, Son of *Odin*, whose Name was used by his Souldiers when they would Fright or Surprise their Enemies ; and the Proverb of Rhyming *Rats to Death*
25 came, I suppose, from the same Root.

There were, not longer since than the time I have mentioned, some Remainders of the *Runick* Poetry among the *Irish*. The Great Men of their Septs, among the many Offices of their Family, which continued always in the
30 same Races, had not only a *Physician*, a *Hunts-man*, a *Smith*, and such like, but a *Poet* and a *Tale-teller*. The first Recorded and Sung the Actions of their Ancestors, and Entertained the Company at Feasts : The latter Amuzed them with Tales when they were Melancholy and
35 could not sleep. And a very Gallant Gentleman of the

North of Ireland has told me of his own Experience, That, in his Wolf-Huntings there, when he used to be abroad in the Mountains three or four Days together, and lay very ill a Nights, so as he could not well sleep, they would bring him one of these *Tale-tellers*, that, when he lay down, 5 would begin a Story of a King, or a Gyant, a Dwarf and a Damosel, and such rambling stuff, and continue it all Night long in such an even Tone that you heard it going on whenever you awaked; and he believed nothing any Physitians give could have so good and so innocent effect, 10 to make Men Sleep in any Pains or Distempers of Body or Mind. I remember, in my youth, some Persons of our Country to have said Grace in Rhymes, and others their constant Prayers; and 'tis vulgar enough that some Deeds or Conveyances of Land have been so since the 15 Conquest.

In such poor wretched Weeds as these was Poetry cloathed, during those shades of Ignorance that overspread all *Europe* for so many Ages after the Sun-set of the *Roman* Learning and Empire together, which were 20 Succeeded by so many New Dominions or Plantations of the *Gothick* Swarms, and by a New Face of Customs, Habit, Language, and almost of Nature. But upon the dawn of a New Day, and the Resurrection of other Sciences, with the Two Learned Languages, among us, 25 This of Poetry began to appear very early, tho' very unlike it self, and in shapes as well as Cloaths, in Humor and in Spirit, very different from the Antient. It was now all in Rhyme, after the *Gothick* fashion; for indeed none of the several Dialects of that Language or Allay would bear the 30 Composure of such Feet and Measures as were in use among the *Greeks* and *Latins*; and some that attempted it soon left it off, despairing of Success. Yet, in this new Dress, Poetry was not without some Charms, especially those of Grace and Sweetness, and the Oar begun to shine 35

in the Hands and Works of the first Refiners. *Petrarch*,
Ronsard, *Spencer* met with much Applause upon the
Subjects of Love, Praise, Grief, Reproach. *Ariosto* and
Tasso entred boldly upon the Scene of *Heroick* Poems,
5 but, having not Wings for so high Flights, began to Learn
of the old Ones, fell upon their Imitations, and chiefly of
Virgil, as far as the Force of their Genius or Dis-
advantage of New Languages and Customs would allow.
The Religion of the Gentiles had been woven into the
10 Contexture of all the antient Poetry with a very agreeable
mixture, which made the Moderns affect to give that of
Christianity a place also in their Poems. But the true
Religion was not found to become Fiction so well as
a false had done, and all their Attempts of this kind
15 seemed rather to debase Religion than to heighten Poetry.
Spencer endeavoured to Supply this with Morality, and to
make Instruction instead of Story the Subject of an
Epick Poem. His Execution was Excellent, and his
Flights of Fancy very Noble and High, but his Design
20 was Poor, and his Moral lay so bare that it lost the
Effect: 'tis true, the Pill was Gilded, but so thin that
the Colour and the Taste were too easily discovered.

After these three, I know none of the Moderns that have
made any Atchievments in *Heroick* Poetry worth Record-
25 ing. The Wits of the Age soon left off such bold Adven-
tures, and turned to other Veins, as if, not worthy to sit
down at the Feast, they contented themselves with the
Scraps, with Songs and Sonnets, with Odes and Elegies,
with Satyrs and Panegyricks, and what we call Copies of
30 Verses upon any Subjects or Occasions, wanting either
Genius or Application for Nobler or more Laborious
Productions, as *Painters* that cannot Succeed in great
Pieces turn to Miniature.

But the modern Poets, to value this small Coyn, and
35 make it pass, tho' of so much a baser Metal than the old,

gave it a New Mixture from Two Veins which were little known or little esteemed among the Ancients. There were indeed certain *Fairy*es in the old Regions of Poetry, called *Epigrams*, which seldom reached above the Stature of Two or Four or Six Lines, and which, Being so short, 5 were all turned upon Conceit, or some sharp Hits of Fancy or Wit. The only Ancient of this kind among the *Latins* were the *Priapeia*, which were little Voluntaries or Extemporaries Written upon the ridiculous Woodden Statues of *Priapus* among the Gardens of *Rome*. In the decays 10 of the *Roman* Learning and Wit as well as Language, *Martial*, *Ausonius*, and others fell into this Vein, and applied it indifferently to all Subjects, which was before Restrained to one, and Drest it something more cleanly than it was Born. This Vein of Conceit seemed proper for 15 such Scraps or Splinters into which Poetry was broken, and was so eagerly followed, as almost to over-run all that was Composed in our several modern Languages. The *Italian*, the *French*, the *Spanish*, as well as *English*, were for a great while full of nothing else but Conceit. It was an Ingredient 20 that gave Taste to Compositions which had little of themselves; 'twas a Sauce that gave Point to Meat that was Flat, and some Life to Colours that were Fading; and, in short, those who could not furnish Spirit supplied it with this Salt, which may preserve Things or Bodys that are 25 Dead, but is, for ought I know, of little use to the Living, or necessary to Meats that have much or pleasing Tasts of their own. However it were, this Vein first over-flowed our modern Poetry, and with so little Distinction or Judgment that we would have Conceit as well as Rhyme 30 in every Two Lines, and run through all our long Scribbles as well as the short, and the whole Body of the Poem, whatever it is. This was just as if a Building should be nothing but Ornament, or Cloaths nothing but Trimming; as if a Face should be covered over with black 35

Patches, or a Gown with Spangles; which is all I shall say of it.

Another Vein which has entred and helpt to Corrupt our modern Poesy is that of Ridicule, as if nothing pleased
 5 but what made one Laugh, which yet come from Two very different Affections of the Mind; for as Men have no Disposition to Laugh at things they are most pleased with, so they are very little pleased with many things they Laught at.

10 But this mistake is very general, and such modern Poets as found no better way of pleasing thought they could not fail of it by Ridiculing. This was Encouraged by finding Conversation run so much into the same Vein, and the Wits in Vogue to take up with that Part of it which
 15 was formerly left to those that were called Fools, and were used in great Families only to make the Company Laugh. What Opinion the *Romans* had of this Character appears in those Lines of *Horace*:

— *Absentem qui rodit amicum,*
 20 *Qui non defendit alio culpante, solutos*
Qui captat risus hominum famamque dicacis,
Fingere qui non visa potest, Commissa tacere
Qui nequit, Hic Niger est, Hunc tu, Romane, caveto;

And 'tis pity the Character of a Wit in one Age should
 25 be so like that of a Black in another.

Rablais seems to have been Father of the Ridicule, a Man of Excellent and Universal Learning as well as Wit; and tho' he had too much Game given him for *Satyr* in that Age, by the Customs of Courts and of Convents, of
 30 Processes and of Wars, of Schools and of Camps, of Romances and Legends, Yet he must be Confest to have kept up his Vein of Ridicule by saying many things so Malicious, so Smutty, and so Prophane, that either a Prudent, a Modest, or a Pious Man could not have afforded, tho' he

had never so much of that Coyn about him ; and it were to be wished that the Wits who have followed his Vein had not put too much Value upon a Dress that better Understandings would not wear, at least in publick, and upon a compass they gave themselves which other Men would 5 not take. The Matchless Writer of *Don Quixot* is much more to be admired for having made up so excellent a Composition of Satyr or Ridicule without those Ingredients, and seems to be the best and highest Strain that ever was or will be reached by that Vein. 10

It began first in Verse with an *Italian* Poem, called *La Secchia Rapita*, was pursued by *Scarron* in *French* with his *Virgil* Travesty, and in *English* by Sir *John Mince*, *Hudibras*, and *Cotton*, and with greater height of *Burlesque* in the *English* than, I think, in any other Language. But 15 let the Execution be what it will, the Design, the Custom, and Example are very pernicious to Poetry, and indeed to all Virtue and Good Qualities among Men, which must be disheartened by finding how unjustly and undistinguish't they fall under the lash of Raillery, and this Vein of 20 Ridiculing the Good as well as the Ill, the Guilty and the Innocent together. 'Tis a very poor tho' common Pretence to merit, to make it appear by the Faults of other Men. A mean Wit or Beauty may pass in a Room, where the rest of the Company are allowed to have none ; 'tis something 25 to sparkle among Diamonds, but to shine among *Pebbles* is neither Credit nor Value worth the pretending.

Besides these two Veins brought in to supply the Defects of the modern Poetry, much Application has been made to the Smoothness of Language or Style, which has 30 at the best but the Beauty of Colouring in a Picture, & can never make a good one without Spirit and Strength. The Academy set up by Cardinal *Richlieu* to amuse the Wits of that Age and Country, and divert them from raking into his Politicks and Ministry, brought this in 35

Vogue; and the *French* Wits have for this last Age been in a manner wholly turned to the Refinement of their Language, and indeed with such Success that it can hardly be excelled, and runs equally through their Verse and their
5 Prose. The same Vein has been likewise much Cultivated in our modern *English* Poetry; and by such poor Recruits have the broken Forces of this Empire been of late made up; with what Success, I leave to be judged by such as consider it in the former Heights and the present Declines
10 both of Power and of Honour; but this will not discourage, however it may affect, the true Lovers of this Mistriss, who must ever think her a Beauty in Rags as well as in Robes.

Among these many Decays, there is yet one sort of
15 Poetry that seems to have succeeded much better with our Moderns than any of the rest, which is *Dramatick*, or that of the Stage. In this the *Italian*, the *Spanish*, and the *French* have all had their different Merit, and received their just Applauses. Yet I am deceived if our *English*
20 has not in some kind excelled both the Modern and the Antient, which has been by Force of a Vein Natural perhaps to our Country, and which with us is called Humour, a Word peculiar to our Language too, and hard to be expressed in any other; nor is it, that I know of,
25 found in any Foreign Writers, unless it be *Moliere*, and yet his it self has too much of the Farce to pass for the same with ours. *Shakespear* was the first that opened this Vein upon our Stage, which has run so freely and so pleasantly ever since, that I have often wondered to find it
30 appear so little upon any others, being a Subject so proper for them, since Humour is but a Picture of particular Life, as Comedy is of general; and tho' it represents Dispositions and Customs less common, yet they are not less natural than those that are more frequent among Men;
35 for if Humour it self be forced, it loses all the Grace;

which has been indeed the Fault of some of our Poets most Celebrated in this kind.

It may seem a Defect in the antient Stage that the Characters introduced were so few, and those so common, as a Covetous Old Man, an Amorous Young, a Witty Wench, 5 a Crafty Slave, a Bragging Soldier. The Spectators met nothing upon the Stage, but what they met in the Streets and at every Turn. All the Variety is drawn only from different and uncommon Events, whereas if the Characters are so too, the Diversity and the Pleasure must needs be 10 the more. But as of most general Customs in a Country there is usually some Ground from the Nature of the People or the Clymat, so there may be amongst us for this Vein of our Stage, and a greater variety of Humor in the Picture, because there is a greater variety in the Life. 15 This may proceed from the Native Plenty of our Soyl, the unequalness of our Clymat, as well as the Ease of our Government, and the Liberty of Professing Opinions and Factions, which perhaps our Neighbours may have about them, but are forced to disguise, and thereby they may 20 come in time to be extinguish't. Plenty begets Wantonness and Pride: Wantonness is apt to invent, and Pride scorns to imitate. Liberty begets Stomach or Heart, and Stomach will not be Constrained. Thus we come to have more Originals, and more that appear what they are; we have 25 more Humour, because every Man follows his own, and takes a Pleasure, perhaps a Pride, to shew it.

On the contrary, where the People are generally poor, and forced to hard Labour, their Actions and Lives are all of a Piece; where they serve hard Masters, they must 30 follow his Examples as well as Commands, and are forced upon Imitation in small Matters as well as Obedience in great: So that some Nations look as if they were cast all by one Mould, or Cut out all by one Pattern,—at least the common People in one, and the Gentlemen in another: 35

They seem all of a sort in their Habits, their Customs, and even their Talk and Conversation, as well as in the Application and Pursuit of their Actions and their Lives.

Besides all this, there is another sort of Variety amongst us, which arises from our Clymat, and the Dispositions it Naturally produces. We are not only more unlike one another than any Nation I know, but we are more unlike our selves too at several times, and owe to our very Air some ill Qualities as well as many good. We may allow some Distempers Incident to our Clymat, since so much Health, Vigor, and Length of Life have been generally Ascribed to it; for among the *Greek* and *Roman* Authors themselves, we shall find the *Britains* observed to Live the longest, and the *Ægyptians* the shortest, of any Nations that were known in those Ages. Besides, I think none will Dispute the Native Courage of our Men and Beauty of our Women, which may be elsewhere as great in Particulars, but no where so in General; they may be (what is said of Diseases) as Acute in other Places, but with us they are Epidemical. For my own Part, who have Conversed much with Men of other Nations, and such as have been both in great Employments and Esteem, I can say very impartially that I have not observed among any so much true Genius as among the *English*: No where more Sharpness of Wit, more Pleasantness of Humour, more Range of Fancy, more Penetration of Thought or Depth of Reflection among the better Sort: No where more Goodness of Nature and of Meaning, nor more Plainness of Sense and of Life than among the common Sort of Country-People, nor more blunt Courage and Honesty than among our Sea-men.

But, with all this, our Country must be confest to be what a great Foreign Physitian called it, The Region of Spleen, which may arise a good deal from the great uncertainty and many suddain Changes of our Weather in all

Seasons of the Year. And how much these Affect the Heads and Hearts, especially of the finest Tempers, is hard to be Believed by Men whose Thoughts are not turned to such Speculations. This makes us unequal in our Humours, inconstant in our Passions, uncertain in our 5 Ends, and even in our Desires. Besides, our different Opinions in Religion, and the Factions they have Raised or Animated for Fifty Years past, have had an ill Effect upon our Manners and Customs, inducing more Avarice, Ambition, Disguise, with the usual Consequences of them, than 10 were before in our Constitution. From all this it may happen that there is no where more true Zeal in the many different Forms of Devotion, and yet no where more Knavery under the Shews and Pretences. There are no where so many Disputers upon Religion, so many Reason- 15 ers upon Government, so many Refiners in Politicks, so many Curious Inquisitives, so many Pretenders to Business and State-Employments, greater Porers upon Books, nor Plodders after Wealth. And yet no where more Abandoned Libertines, more refined Luxurists, Extrava- 20 gant Debauches, Conceited Gallants, more Dabblers in Poetry as well as Politicks, in Philosophy, and in Chymistry. I have had several Servants far gone in Divinity, others in Poetry; have known, in the Families of some Friends, a Keeper deep in the *Rosycrucia* Principles, and a Laun- 25 dress firm in those of *Epicurus*. What Effect soever such a Composition or Medly of Humours among us may have upon our Lives or our Government, it must needs have a good one upon our Stage, and has given admirable Play to our Comical Wits: So that in my Opinion there is no Vein 30 of that sort, either Antient or Modern, which Excels or Equals the Humour of our Plays. And for the rest, I cannot but observe, (to) the Honour of our Country, that the good Qualities amongst us seem to be Natural, and the ill ones more Accidental, and such as would be easily Changed 35

by the Examples of Princes, and by the Precepts of Laws ; such, I mean, as should be Designed to Form Manners, to Restrain Excesses, to Encourage Industry, to Prevent Mens Expences beyond their Fortunes, to Countenance Virtue, and Raise that True Esteem due to Plain Sense and Common Honesty.

But to Spin off this Thread which is already Grown too long : What Honour and Request the antient Poetry has Lived in may not only be Observed from the Universal Reception and Use in all Nations (from China to Peru) from Scythia to Arabia, but from the Esteem of the Best and the Greatest Men as well as the Vulgar. Among the *Hebrews*, *David* and *Solomon*, the Wisest Kings, *Job* and *Jeremiah*, the Holiest Men, were the best Poets of their Nation and Language. Among the *Greeks*, the Two most renowned Sages and Law-givers were *Lycurgus* and *Solon*, whereof the Last is known to have excelled in Poetry, and the first was so great a Lover of it, That to his Care and Industry we are said by some Authors to owe the Collection and Preservation of the loose and scattered Pieces of *Homer* in the Order wherein they have since appeared. *Alexander* is reported neither to have Travelled nor Slept without those admirable Poems always in his Company. *Phalaris*, that was Inexorable to all other Enemies, Relented at the Charms of *Stesichorus* his Muse. Among the *Romans*, the Last and Great *Scipio* passed the soft Hours of his Life in the Conversation of *Terence*, and was thought to have a Part in the composition of his Comedies. *Cæsar* was an Excellent Poet as well as Orator, and Composed a Poem in his Voyage from *Rome* to *Spain*, Relieving the Tedious Difficulties of his March with the Entertainments of his Muse. *Augustus* was not only a Patron, but a Friend and Companion of *Virgil* and *Horace*, and was himself both an Admirer of Poetry and a pretender too, as far as his Genius would reach or his busy Scene allow. 'Tis

true, since his Age we have few such Examples of great Princes favouring or affecting Poetry, and as few perhaps of great Poets deserving it. Whether it be that the fierceness of the *Gothick* Humors, or Noise of their perpetual Wars, frightened it away, or that the unequal mixture of the Modern Languages would not bear it, Certain it is, That the great Heighths and Excellency both of Poetry and Musick fell with the *Roman* Learning and Empire, and have never since recovered the Admiration and Applauses that before attended them. Yet such as they are amongst us, they must be confest to be the Softest and Sweetest, the most General and most Innocent Amusements of common Time and Life. They still find Room in the Courts of Princes and the Cottages of Shepherds. They serve to Revive and Animate the dead Calm of poor or idle Lives, and to Allay or Divert the violent Passions and Perturbations of the greatest and the busiest Men. And both these Effects are of equal use to Humane Life; for the Mind of Man is like the Sea, which is neither agreeable to the Beholder nor the Voyager in a Calm or in a Storm, but is so to both when a little Agitated by gentle Gales; and so the Mind, when moved by soft and easy Passions or Affections. I know very well that many, who pretend to be Wise by the Forms of being Grave, are apt to despise both Poetry and Musick as Toys and trifles too light for the Use or Entertainment of serious Men. But whoever find themselves wholly insensible to these Charms would, I think, do well to keep their own Counsel, for fear of Reproaching their own Temper, and bringing the Goodness of their Natures, if not of their Understandings, into Question. It may be thought at least an ill Sign, if not an ill Constitution, since some of the Fathers went so far as to esteem the Love of Musick a Sign of Predestination, as a thing Divine, and Reserved for the Felicities of Heaven it self. While this World lasts, I doubt not but the Pleasure and Request

of these Two Entertainments will do so too ; and happy those that content themselves with these or any other so Easy and so Innocent, and do not trouble the World or other Men, because they cannot be quiet themselves, 5 though no body hurts them !

When all is done, Human Life is, at the greatest and the best, but like a froward Child, that must be Play'd with and Humor'd a little to keep it quiet till it falls asleep. and then the Care is over.

NOTES

THE essays 'Upon the Ancient and Modern Learning' and 'Of Poetry' were published in the second part of Temple's *Miscellanea*, which appeared in November, 1690. The third edition, containing the author's final revision, has been used as the basis of the present text (*Miscellanea, the Second Part, in Four Essays: I. Upon Ancient and Modern Learning. II. Upon the Gardens of Epicurus. III. Upon Heroick Virtue. IV. Upon Poetry. By Sir William Temple, Baronet. Juvat antiquos accedere Fontes. The Third Edition, Corrected and Augmented by the Author*, London, 1692). Temple's posthumous 'Defence of the Essay upon Antient and Modern Learning', published by Swift in *Miscellanea, The Third Part*, 1701, should also be consulted by the student.

The first, and in fact both, of the essays were provoked by the so-called controversy of Ancients and Moderns, which had been precipitated, or rather given a new turn, by Charles Perrault, who read a poem on the superiority of the moderns, *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand*, at a meeting of the French Academy on January 27, 1687; and in the following year Fontenelle published his *Digression sur les Anciens et les Modernes*, and Perrault the first volume of his elaborate defence, the *Parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes*. In the controversy that ensued, Boileau, Dacier, and others espoused the cause of the ancients against Perrault and Fontenelle. Temple's essay focussed English attention on the controversy, and resulted not only in a general discussion, in which William Wotton, Rymer, and others took part, but more especially in a bitter quarrel on the authenticity of the Letters of Phalaris, which Temple had mentioned as an illustration of the literary superiority of the ancients (cf. note to 34. 30 sq.). Rigault's *Histoire de la Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, 1856, is still the best account of the whole matter, for England as well as for France: cf. Brunetière, *Évolution des Genres*, ch. iv; Spingarn, *Critical Essays of the*

Seventeenth Century, vol. i, p. lxxxviii sq.; Vial and Denise, *Idées et Doctrines littéraires du XVII^e siècle*, pp. 247-90; Daniels, *Saint-Évremond en Angleterre*, 1907; Jebb, *Life of Bentley*; Macaulay, *Essay on Temple*; and *D.N.B.* s.v. Temple and Bentley.

PAGE 2. 20. *The Antediluvian World*, i.e. Thomas Burnet's *Sacred Theory of the Earth*, the first part of which, describing Paradise and the Deluge, appeared in an English dress in 1684, three years after the Latin original; the second part was published in 1689.

21. *The Plurality of Worlds*, i.e. Fontenelle's *Entretiens sur la Pluralité des Mondes*, 1686, translated into English by John Glanvill in 1688.

PAGE 3. 4. *A small Piece concerning Poesy*. In 1688, Fontenelle published a volume of *Poésies Pastorales*, which contained, in addition to the very tame pastorals themselves, a *Discours sur la Nature de l'Églogue* and the highly significant *Digression sur les Anciens et les Modernes*.

PAGE 4. 20. The fragments of the Egyptian priest Manetho (B. C. 283-246) on the history of Egypt are collected by Müller, *Frag. Hist. Graec.*, 1856.

21. Justin, *Hist. Philippi*, ii. 1. 5.

22. Herodotus, bks. iii, iv, *passim*; Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. Hist.* xix. 73.

PAGE 9. 16. Temple's account of the Brahmins of India is almost wholly derived from Strabo, *Geog.* xv. 1. 59-73: on Calanus (10. 29), see *ibid.* xv. 1. 64; on Zoromanochages, i.e. Zarmanochegas (11. 12), *ibid.* xv. 1. 73.

PAGE 11. 26. Herodotus, iv. 2.

PAGE 12. 30. *Missionary Jesuits*. Temple seems to have in mind two Portuguese Jesuits, from whose works his account of China (to 13. 32) is for the most part derived: Alvaro Semmedo, author of the *Imperio de la China* (Engl. transl., *The History of the Great and Renowned Monarchy of China*, 1655; cf. pp. 31-58, 86-96), and Gabriel de Magalhaens, author of the *Doze Excellencias da China* (Engl. transl., *New History of China*, 1688); cf. also the work of the Belgian Jesuit, Philippe Couplet, *Confucius, Sinarum Philosophus, sive Scientia Sinica Latine exposita*, 1687.

PAGE 15. 4. *Amautas*, the sages of the Peruvian Incas; cf.

Garcilaso de la Vega's *Commentarios Reales de los Yncas*, 1609 (abridged version by Sir Paul Rycaut, *The Royal Commentaries of Peru*, 1688), bk. ii, ch. 27, on 'the poetry of the Yncas *Amautas*, who are philosophers, and *Haravicus* or poets'.

PAGE 19. 25-6. The 'Stag's head at Amboyse' is described by Evelyn, *Diary*, May 2, 1644. The 'large Table at Memorancy' has been identified by M. Pierre de Nolhac as the sixteenth-century table, with decorations by Jean Bullant, once owned by the constable Anne de Montmorency at the Château d'Écouen, but now at Chantilly.

PAGE 20. 25 sq. *Science and Arts have run their circles, and had their periods*. On the idea of progress, see Spingarn, *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, vol. i, pp. lxxxix sq., ci sq. The theory of cycles of culture was first widely diffused between the time of Bouhours's *Entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugène*, 1671, and Fontenelle's *Dialogues des Morts*, 1683; cf. Dryden's *Essays*, ed. Ker, i. 36, ii. 25, and *infra*, 30. 17 sq.

PAGE 24. 22. John Reuchlin (1455-1522), the famous German humanist.

23. George Buchanan (1506-1582), the Scottish historian and scholar.

PAGE 25. 22. *The New French Author*, &c. See *supra*, note to 3. 4.

PAGE 32. 33. John Wilkins (1614-1672), bishop of Chester.

34. *D'Avila*. Enrico Caterino Davila's *Historia delle Guerre civili di Francia* appeared in 1630.

34. Famianus Strada (1572-1649), author of the *Prolusiones*; his *De Bello Belgico*, 1632-47, was translated into English by Sir R. Stapylton in 1650.

35. The German historian Sleidanus (John Philippon, 1506-1556) published his *De Statu Religionis et Reipublicae Carolo Quinto Caesare Commentarii* at Strassburg in 1555; it was translated in 1560 as *Sleidanus Commentaries*.

PAGE 34. 30-35. 22. This is the passage which precipitated the Bentley-Boyle controversy. The letters ascribed without foundation to the Sicilian tyrant Phalaris had been widely diffused during the Renaissance; they had been translated into Latin and into Italian before the end of the fifteenth century, twice into French before the end of the sixteenth, and into

English by W. D. in 1634 ; they were again translated by J. S. in 1699. Bentley's *Dissertation* settled the question of their spuriousness; for a list of the controversial pamphlets in the dispute, see Dyce's edition of the *Dissertation*, 1836, vol. i, pp. xi-xviii.

PAGE 35. 8. *Politian*, i.e. Angelo Poliziano (1454-1494), the famous Italian humanist. The passage to which Temple refers occurs in Poliziano's first Epistle (*Angeli Politiani Opera*, Lyons, 1539, p. 2).

33. The allusion to the Roman History of Velleius Paterculus (written under Tiberius) as a model of Latin style is an instance of Temple's casual and uncritical judgements, not unlike that on the Phalaris Letters.

PAGE 36. 5. The 'little Treatise' of Minucius Felix is the *Octavius*, a charming dialogue in the Ciceronian manner, written in defence of Christianity in the age of Marcus Aurelius.

13-31. This list of great writers has been ridiculed by Macaulay because of the omission of Dante, Tasso, Shakespeare, Milton, Molière, and other poets ; but Temple has specifically limited the discussion to prose (*supra*, 33. 12-13: 'But the Consideration of Poetry ought to be a subject by it self. For the Books we have in Prose,' &c.). Macaulay's censure is therefore unfounded.

15. *Padre Paolo*, i.e. Fra Paolo Sarpi (1552-1623), historian of the Council of Trent; the *Istoria del Concilio Tridentino* was published at London in 1619.

16. Antonio de Guevara (1495?-1545), author of the *Relox de Principes, o Marco Aurelio*, 1529, and other works; they were translated by North, Hellowes, and Fenton, and the *Letters* by Savage as late as 1657. Their inflated style was once thought to have exercised an influence on Lyly's Euphuism.

22. The *Histoire amoureuse des Gaules* of Roger de Rabutin, comte de Bussy (1618-1693), was published c. 1665; 'a pretty libel against the amours of the Court of France' (Pepys, *Diary*, May 1, 1666).

PAGE 38. 3-7. Ovid first enunciated the theory that peace is essential to poetry; see *Tristia*, i. 1. 39.

PAGE 41. 22 sq. The theory that 'Cervantes smiled Spain's chivalry away' (Byron, *Don Juan*, xiii. 11) has persisted in

English literature since Temple first gave expression to it in this passage; cf. Steele, in the *Taller*, no. 219, Defoe's *Memoirs of Captain Carleton*, Motteux's preface to *Don Quixote*, 1700 (Becker, *Don Quixote in der englischen Literatur*, p. 26 sq.). Rapin (*Réflexions sur la Poétique*, ii. 28) ascribes Cervantes's satire on chivalry to personal pique.

PAGE 42. 24. Temple apparently refers, not to Alfonso X, the Learned (*el Sabio*), King of Castile from 1252 to 1284, but to Alfonso V of Aragon, I of Naples and Sicily (1385-1458), the hero of Panormita's *De Dictis et Factis Regis Alphonsi*. The passage which Temple cites is paraphrased from Melchior de Santa Cruz's *Floresta Española de Apothegmas*, from which Bacon had also borrowed his 97th Apophthegm.

PAGE 45. 3. Virgil, *Ecl.* viii. 69-71.

PAGE 46. 5. Meric Casaubon's *Treatise concerning Enthusiasme, as it is an Effect of Nature, but is mistaken by many for either Divine Inspiration or Diabolical Possession* was published in 1655.

PAGE 53. 22-55. 17. The long campaign against the critical rules of neoclassicism was inaugurated in the first half of the sixteenth century by Aretino (cf. Vossler, 'Pietro Aretino's künstlerisches Bekenntnis', in the *Neue Heidelberger Jahrbücher*, 1900), and was continued by Giordano Bruno, Marino, and others (see Spingarn, *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, vol. i, p. lxxv); but Saint-Évremond led the vanguard in Temple's day. His essays are filled with attacks on the Rules; cf. *Œuvres mêlées*, ed. Giraud, Paris, 1865, ii. 414: 'Vous avez raison, Messieurs, vous avez raison de vous moquer des songes d'Aristote et d'Horace, des rêveries de Heinsius et de Grotius, des caprices de Corneille et de Ben Johnson, des fantaisies de Rapin et de Boileau. La seule règle des honnêtes gens, c'est la mode. Que sert une raison qui n'est point reçue, et qui peut trouver à redire à une extravagance qui plaît?' (cf. *ibid.* ii. 321, 387, 501-2, &c.). The influence of Saint-Évremond's critical work at this time was very great. The first English versions, *Mixt Essays . . . written originally in French by the Sieur de Saint Evremond*, 1685, and *Miscellanea, or Various Discourses*, translated by F. Spence, 1686, were probably the first volumes of critical essays that had ever appeared in England; these were followed by the *Miscellaneous Essays*, 1692-94, in two volumes,

translated by various hands, by the *Works*, 1700, in two volumes, and by a three-volume collection 'with the Author's Life by Mr. Des Maizeaux', 1714 (2nd ed. 1728). In addition to these, Silvestre and Des Maizeaux published at least two editions of the French originals in London, the *Œuvres mêlées*, 1705, in two volumes, and the *Véritables Œuvres*, 1706, in three. Gildon, in the *Complete Art of Poetry*, 1718, i. 117 sq., answers Temple's attack on the Rules, as well as that in Farquhar's *Discourse upon Comedy*, 1702.

PAGE 54. 17. *It would be too much Mortification to these great Arbitrary Rulers . . . to Observe the worthy Productions that have been formed by their Rules.* Cf. Dryden's prologue to *Love Triumphant*, 1694 (*Works*, ed. Scott-Saintsbury, viii. 379):

'To Shakespeare's critic [i. e. Rymer] he [i. e. Dryden]
bequeathes the curse,
To find his faults, and yet himself make worse;
A precious reader in poetic schools,
Who by his own examples damns his rules.'

Cf. also Saint-Évremond's anecdote of the Abbé d'Aubignac (*Œuvres mêlées*, ii. 320), and Fontenelle (*Œuvres*, ed. 1764, iii. 80): 'Ces règles qui ne sont pas encore faites, ou que tout le monde ne sait pas, voilà apparemment l'art de plaire, voilà en quoi consiste la magie.'

31. *Fœliciter audet.* Horace, *Epist.* ii. i. 166.

32. *Lusit amabiliter.* *Ibid.* ii. i. 148.

PAGE 55. 3. *Ibid.* ii. i. 211-13.

31. Aristotle, *Probl.* xix. 28.

32. Tacitus, *Germ.* ii.

PAGE 56. i. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 57. 14.

PAGE 57. 18. *The Spanish Translation of the Jews in Ferrara.* This version of the Old Testament, begun in the fifteenth century, was completed in the sixteenth by Abraham Usque (E. Pinhel) and Yom Tob Athias (Jerónimo de Vargas), and published at Ferrara in 1553 as the *Biblia en Lengua Española traduzida palabra por palabra de la verdad Hebrayca por muy excelentes Letrados.*

PAGE 60. 20. *Book of Fables*, &c. This refers to *Le Livre des Lumières, ou la Conduite des Roys, composé par le sage Pilpay*,

Indien, traduit en françois par David Sahid d'Ispahan, Paris, 1644. It was virtually what it professed to be, a translation of a Persian form of the Arabic *Kalilah wa Dimnah*, which in its turn goes back to the original Indian fables of Bidpai, or Pilpay. La Fontaine borrowed some of his best fables from this source.

29. *Longi Pastoralia*, i.e. the famous Greek pastoral romance of *Daphnis and Chloe*, ascribed to Longus.

PAGE 62. 6. *Florus*, the 'Florus poeta' (probably P. Annius Florus) whose verses to Hadrian, in which this phrase occurs, are preserved by Aelius Spartianus, *Adrian*. xv.

9. These verses of Hadrian are also to be found in the same book of Aelius Spartianus.

PAGE 63. 20 sq. Wotton (*Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning*, 3rd ed., 1705, p. 509) points out that Temple's 'Runic' knowledge is chiefly derived from two Danish scholars, Olaus Wormius and Thomas Bartholin the younger. Wormius published his *Literatura Runica* in 1636, *Danicorum Monumentorum libri sex* in 1643, and other works on Scandinavian antiquities; Bartholin's *Antiquitates Danicae* appeared at Copenhagen in 1689. For an account of these and other works accessible to Temple, including Robert Sheringham's *De Anglorum Gentis Origine Disceptatio*, 1670, see F. E. Farley's *Scandinavian Influences in the English Romantic Movement*, Boston, U. S. A., 1903.

PAGE 67. 15. *Lougaroos*, i.e. 'loups-garous.'

18 sq. On these imaginary derivations of 'mare' or 'nightmare' from *Mara*, of 'bo' or 'bogle-bo' from *Bo*, and 'Old Nick' from *Nicka*, see Olaus Wormius, *Dan. Mon.* i. 4, Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, ed. Ellis, ii. 515, 519, and *N. E. D.* s. v. On 'rhyming rats to death', see the notes of the commentators on *As You Like It*, III. ii. 187-8.

PAGE 69. 9-15. Boileau's authority (*Art Poétique*, iii. 193 sq.) had given a setback to the argument in favour of Christian machinery in heroic poetry; cf. Dryden's *Essays*, ed. Ker, i. 32, and note.

20. *His Moral lay so bare that it lost the Effect*. Cf. Addison, *Account of the greatest English Poets*, 1694, on Spenser:

'While the dull moral lies too plain below.'

27 sq. *They contented themselves with the Scraps, with Songs and Sonnets*, &c. Temple inherited this contempt for the lyric

from Bacon and Hobbes ; cf. Rapin, *Réflexions sur la Poétique*, i. 3 (Rymer's transl.): 'Thus an ignorant person shall start up, and be thought a Poet in the world for a lucky hit in a Song or Catch, where is only the empty flash of an imagination heated perhaps by a debauch, and nothing of that celestial fire which only is the portion of an extraordinary Genius . . . A Sonnet, Ode, Elegy, Epigram, and those little kind of Verses that often make so much noise in the world, are ordinarily no more than the meer productions of imagination ; a superficial wit, with a little conversation of the world, is capable of these things.'

PAGE 71. 19. Horace, *Sat.* i. 4. 81-5.

PAGE 72. 12. *La Secchia Rapita*, Alessandro Tassoni's mock heroic poem on the war declared by the Bolognese on the Modenese in order to recover a bucket, was published in 1622.

12. The *Virgile Travesti* of Paul Scarron (1610-1660) was published in 1648-52, and was paraphrased by Charles Cotton (*Scarronides*, 1664).

13. Sir John Mennes, or Mince (1599-1671), is referred to here as co-author of *Wits Recreations*, 1640, and *Musarum Deliciae*, 1655, which owed their inspiration to the *Muses Gaillardes*, the *Parnasse Satyrique*, the *Cabinet Satyrique*, and similar collections of French verse written more or less in imitation of the *Priapeia*.

14. Cotton. See *supra*, note to l. 12.

30 sq. Temple's complaint that 'smoothness of language or style' had taken the place of 'spirit and strength' had been anticipated by La Bruyère, Rapin, and other French critics ; cf. *Réflexions sur la Poétique*, i. 31 (Rymer's transl.): 'Of late some have fallen into another extremity by a too scrupulous care of purity of language : they have begun to take from Poesie all its nerves and all its majesty by a too timorous reservedness and false modesty, which some thought to make the Character of the French Tongue, by robbing it of all those wise and judicious boldnesses that Poesie demands,' &c. It is these occasional elements of freedom in Rapin's theory that made his book popular in England. Cf. Bouhours, *La Manière de bien penser*, ed. 1695, p. 415.

PAGE 73. 14 sq. Saint-Évremond's praise of English comedy in his essay 'De la Comédie angloise', 1677 (*Œuvres mêlées*,

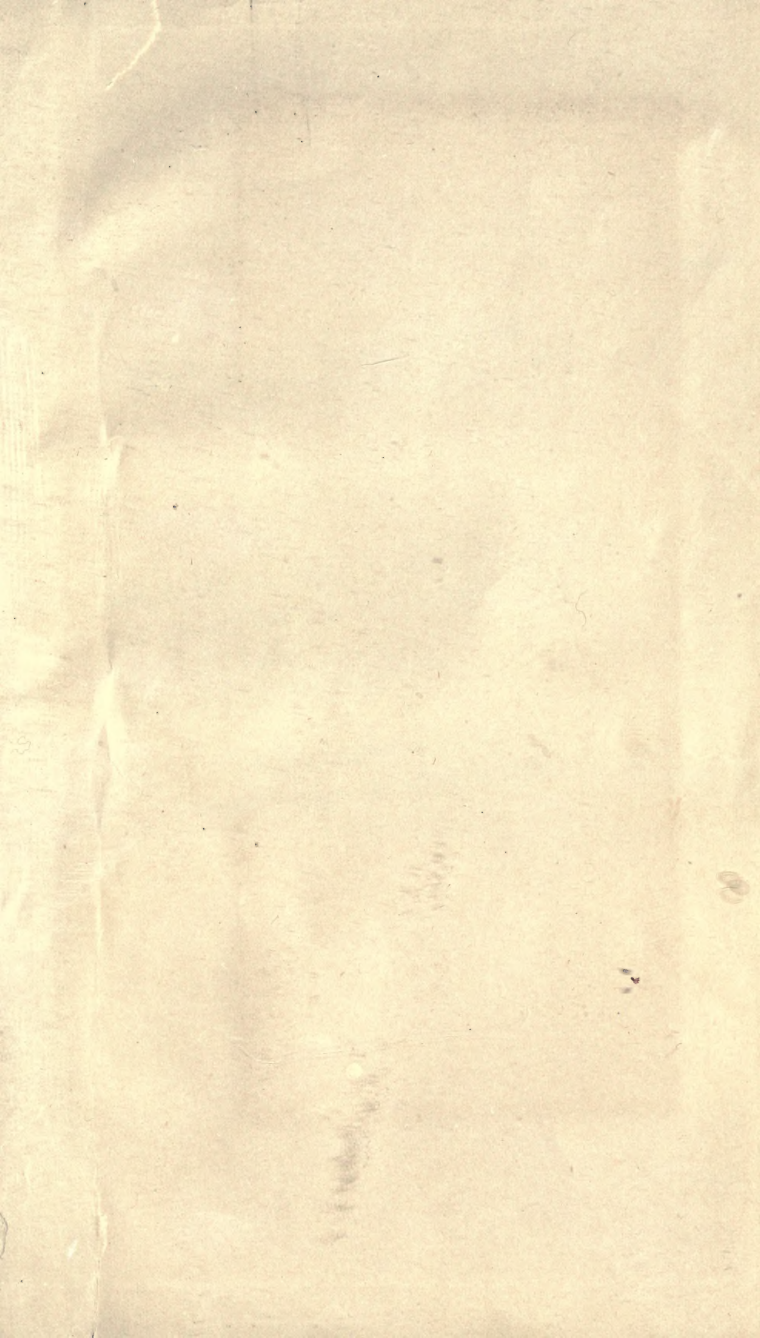
ed. 1865, ii. 383: 'Il n'y a point de comédie qui se conforme plus à celle des anciens que l'angloise, pour ce qui regarde les mœurs,' &c.), counted for much in determining English opinion; and Rymer, Dennis, and Congreve agreed with Temple in thinking that in this *genre* their countrymen had 'excelled both the Modern and the Ancient'. Temple here ascribes the superiority of English comedy to its humour, and his statement that humour is 'a Word peculiar to our Language' became a commonplace of English criticism (see Spingarn, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. lx sq.). He accounted for this fact on the ground of the greater freedom of English manners and government, and this argument was repeated by Congreve (1696) and many others from the 144th *Guardian* in 1713 to Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres* in 1783.

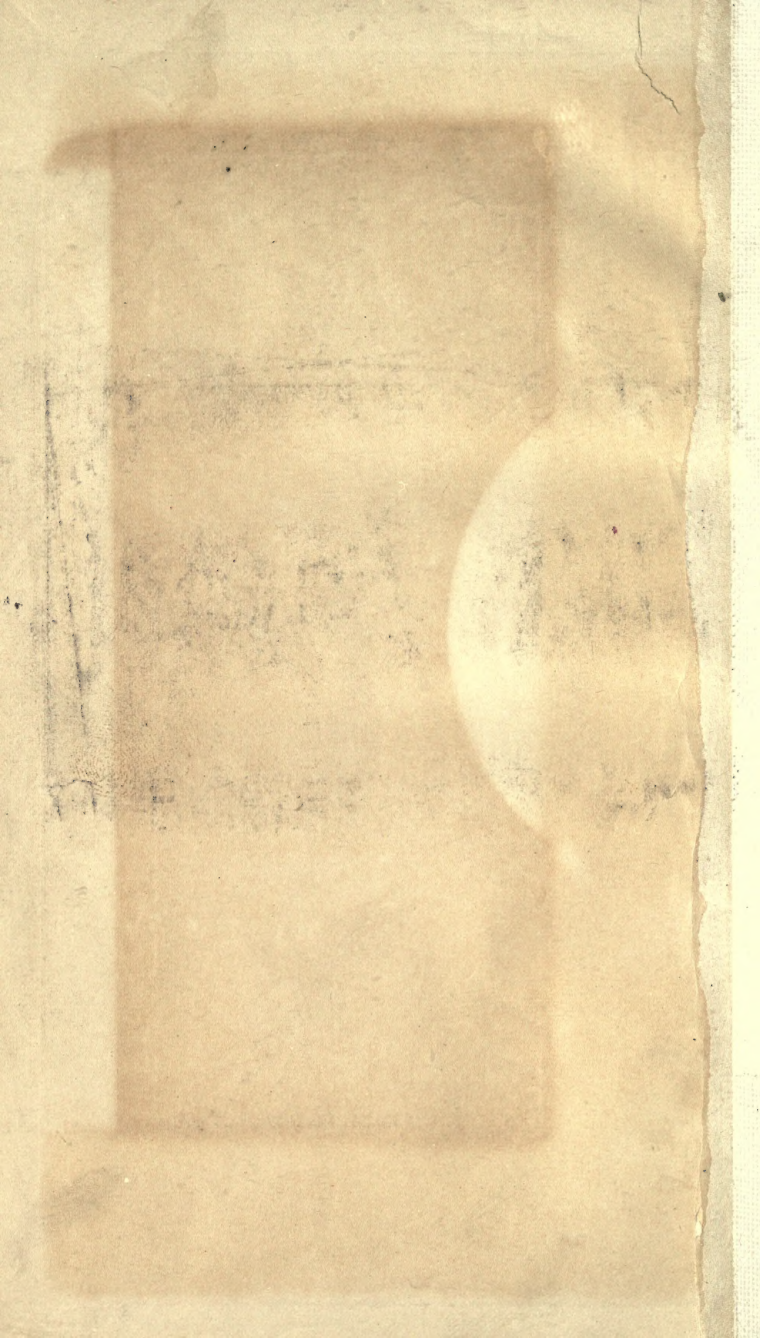
25. Molière's influence in England was then at its height; for an early list of English plays imitated or borrowed from him, see Giles Jacob's *Poetical Register*, 1719, pp. 292-5.

PAGE 76. 25. *Rosycrucia Principes*. The Rosicrucian mysteries, first enunciated in Germany in the *Fama Fraternitatis*, 1614, were expounded in England by Robert Fludd and John Heydon (see *D.N.B.* s. v.), but the *Comte de Gabalis, ou Entretiens sur les Sciences secrètes*, 1670, by the Abbé de Villars, had given them a wider popularity at about this time; the book was translated twice in 1680, by Lovell and by Ayres, and again in 1714.

PAGE 77. 10. *All Nations from China to Peru*, another of the many phrases and commonplaces due to Temple. Dr. Johnson, Thomas Warton, and others repeat the phrase, as Temple himself may have been thinking of Boileau's 'De Paris au Pérou, du Japon jusqu'à Rome.'

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